

SELF-DISCLOSURE AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT OF BLACK COUPLES

By

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To my parents, Bertha and William Chennault, who gave
everything they had to their ten children.

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Several studies have found that there is a relationship between self-disclosure and marital adjustment. However, these findings have been based on studies with white couples. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of various aspects of self-disclosure on the marital adjustment of black husbands and wives.

The self-disclosure dimensions included amount, self-reference percent, intimacy, and duration. Because one partner's self-disclosure behavior is likely to influence the other partner's marital adjustment, both spouses' self-disclosure behavior was examined in relation to each spouse's marital adjustment score.

Forty-eight couples completed the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, Marital Conventionalization Scale (MCS), and a demographic questionnaire. Spouses were asked to disclose to their spouse their thoughts and feelings about three

preselected topics. Their disclosures were audiotaped, transcribed, and coded using the Self-Disclosure Coding System.

Results indicated that marital conventionalization, a measure of social desirability responding, had a significant positive relationship with both husbands' and wives' marital adjustment. Partial correlations were used to control for this influence. Results also indicated that the duration of time that husbands spent talking was negatively related to their marital adjustment. The self-disclosure behaviors associated with wives' marital adjustment scores were (1) wives' percent of self-references, which had a positive association, and (2) the amount of information shared by wives, which had a negative association. For both husbands and wives, the difference in the amount of information that they shared was positively related to their marital adjustment.

It was concluded that self-disclosure may not be important for husbands' marital adjustment. On the other hand, wives' personal disclosure to their husbands appears to be important for wives to feel adjusted in their marriage. In general, sharing information seems to be more important for spouses' marital adjustment than sharing intimate communication. Because of the negative associations between spouses' marital adjustment and some of the self-disclosure behaviors, it was further concluded

that how spouses communicate may be more important than what they communicate. Possible explanations for these findings were discussed along with directions for future research.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Relationship stability remains a significant concept in the interaction between men and women. The vast number of articles and books addressing relationship satisfaction attest to the fact that this is one of the most widely researched topics to date (e.g., Bradbury & Fincham, 1989; Braithwaite, 1981; Cazenave, 1983; Fitzpatrick, 1988; Gottman, 1979; Spanier & Lewis, 1980). The proliferation of marital relationship literature, however, began in the early seventies at a time when both men and women were amidst dramatic social changes that had a direct impact on the perception of marital role responsibilities. The assumption was that this change meant troubled marriages. As a result, this decade of marital research has witnessed an explosion in the search for new relationship variables which explain more variance in marital satisfaction and stability. This explosion, however, centered around the dominant culture.

Since the late 1970s, few empirically-based research articles have appeared which deal specifically with black marital relationships. Casas (1984) stated that the reasons for the lack of attention given to blacks and other minority groups were varied. He cited an irresponsible

lack of interest in these groups, the continued existence of discrimination and racism, and the emphasis on an ethnocentric perspective which downplays cultural differences while emphasizing assimilation.

If popular literature, which has been deluged with articles dealing with the troubled relationships of black men and women, is an indication of the state of black relationships, then social science professionals have been remiss in addressing the relationship concerns of black Americans.

Prior to the 1970s, studies on black marriage and family life focused on historical, anthropological, and sociological perspectives. These studies, however, quite often depicted oblique and negative images of black family life. While these studies may have offered some insight into the unique problems that negatively impacted on black families, they also inspired an even greater need to understand both the adaptive and maladaptive patterns that emerged in black relationships.

While these negative images about black marriages and families are still being challenged in both the popular and professional literature (Cazenave & Smith, 1985), empirical research focusing on the interpersonal relationships of black couples is slowly beginning to emerge.

Statement of the Problem

It has been a common observation that during black social gatherings, a favorite topic of discussion and often

heated debate is the relationship between black men and women. More often, the struggles of black women and the negative attributes of black men seem to be incessant and deeply rooted issues that are debated time and time again without resolve. Much of the conflict, however, seems to be related to the decades of oppression, discrimination, and racism that have transcended social, educational, and economic realms. These experiences, in turn, have developed into feelings of powerlessness, inferiority, subordination, deprivation, anger, and rage (Casas, 1984).

According to Gary (1981), the numerous external pressures experienced by black men often result in overwhelming frustration. This is particularly true of low economic status which was found to be associated with low marital satisfaction (Krokoff, Gottman, & Roy, 1988). As a result of the external pressures, a repertoire of aggressive behaviors are likely to develop (Steward & Scott, 1978). To cope with these pressures, black men (and to some degree black women as well) ". . . use a variety of psychological and social coping mechanisms, including suicide, homicide, crime and vice, drugs, and alcohol for dealing with the racial oppression of these institutions" (Gary, 1981, p. 14). The effects of these destructive coping behaviors are then carried over into the marriage and family, causing havoc and instability in these relationships.

As a result of the overwhelming adversity, it is quite understandable that negative patterns of marital interaction may have developed and been manifested in such destructive ways as verbal aggression and blaming, withdrawal, and passive-aggressive behaviors. These self-defeating patterns may be unconsciously or consciously rationalized as "strategies" necessary for coping and surviving in a cruel, unrelenting world. Since little action is taken to resolve the conflict, the negative self-perpetuating cycle continues.

Equally compelling is the reticence black men seem to have toward sharing personal feelings with their mates. Reasons for this are speculative. One often cited explanation is that sharing feelings threatens one's masculinity and leaves one vulnerable and powerless (Braithwaite, 1981; Davidson, 1980). On the other hand, self-disclosure reticence creates within the individual feelings of alienation from one's self and others (Fromm, 1955). Since both alternatives involve undesirable outcomes, black men are likely to feel even more frustrated because of their "inability" to garner emotional support. Consequently, neither black men nor women receive the empathy or emotional support that they so desperately need to sustain their relationships. In such cases, interpersonal conflicts mount, distrust develops, and intimacy is thwarted.

The negative impact of environmental frustrations and ineffective coping strategies to deal with them have taken a toll on black marital relationships. According to a study conducted by the National Urban League (McGhee, 1984), there is a continuing decline in black married-couple families. In 1960, approximately 74% of black families consisted of a husband-wife pair. This figure declined to 55.5% in 1980 to 53.7% in 1981. McGhee (1984) predicts that if this trend continues, that by 1990 only 37.5% of black families will consist of married couples.

Despite these staggering figures, black men and women continue to seek ways to understand and enhance their relationships as evidenced by the expansive volume of literature addressing black relationships. There is also an ongoing struggle to adapt to and offset the frustrations caused by adverse environmental circumstances. Just as maladaptive coping behaviors developed out of frustrations and survival needs, adaptive patterns also developed from the need to sustain relationships. According to Addison (1983), survival of the black relationship has resulted from mutually shared values and attitudes that developed through the interaction process. This suggests that both black men and women may have developed some unique coping strategies for dealing with relationships as well.

Staples (1973) augmented this point. He stated that as a result of the historical economic instability of blacks, that alternative attitudes and behavioral patterns may have

developed in marriages. He asserted that what may have been observed as "brittle" or "fragile" marriages may simply be a highly functioning adjustment to negative environmental conditions. Although this statement was in reference to such arrangements as marital power, divorce, and childrearing, it can aptly be applied to views on marital satisfaction.

Because the marital relationship has typically been viewed as a safe haven in which spouses could share their innermost feelings and vulnerabilities, the mere fact that previous research suggests that this sanctity does not exist in a great many black relationships is likely to perpetuate feelings of anxiety, frustration, resentment, and isolation. If the relationship is to be sustained, spouses must resolve the apparent discrepancies between what they expect from their relationship and what they get. In an effort to resolve this conflict, perhaps black spouses have altered their marital expectations, especially those expectations related to self-disclosure. For example, it could be that among black married women, marital disclosure is not an expectation, nor does its absence reflect unhealthy relationship functioning as has been suggested (Duckro, Duckro, & Beal, 1976; Jourard, 1959, 1964, 1968). Likewise, in those relationships where self-disclosure is expected, it is possible that black spouses do not expect their partners to disclose equally in the marriage.

A likely explanation for the acceptance of self-disclosure inequity in black relationships is that black women can empathize with black men's need to display power and strength in the relationship. To disclose feelings is apt to be perceived as a display of weakness and a source of vulnerability (Balswick & Peek, 1971; Braithwaite, 1981; Davidson, 1980). In order for black women to decrease the dissonance between their expectations for marital disclosure and their spouses' apparent resistance to disclose, they may have rationalized that it is their responsibility to assist their spouses in maintaining an image of "strength" through non-disclosure. Alternatively, it is plausible that black women have indeed altered their expectation for disclosure since they too may believe that "strong men control their emotions." Regardless of their motivation, either black men are disclosing more to meet their partners' expectations or black women have altered their expectations to allow for less disclosure from their male partners. Since black women seem to be the recipients of less disclosure than they give, it is reasonable to assume that in order to deal with this imbalance, some adaptation was necessary.

Despite the maladaptive coping behaviors engendered by social and economic disparity and the undeniable negative impact this has had on black relationships, black men and women continue to be resilient and adaptable even under the most adverse circumstances. This suggests that black

spouses may have developed unique styles of marital interaction that diverge from the dominant culture. Expectations about the marriage and particularly about the role of self-disclosure communication within the marriage may be culturally specific. If this is indeed the case, an empirical investigation of the interaction patterns between black married couples is indicated.

Need for the Study

Presently, very little empirical research exists about the marital relationships of black couples. The need for further research in this area becomes even more apparent when one considers the insignificant number of articles dealing with racial/ethnic minorities that have appeared in mainstream psychological journals. According to Casas (1984), between 1975 and 1981, only 3% to 4% of the articles appearing in counseling and psychotherapy journals focused on racial/ethnic minorities. Even fewer studies exist which have investigated the interaction within black marriages and no studies have examined behavioral correlates of marital satisfaction.

According to English (1974), much of the past research on black marital relationships has been plagued with both methodological and conceptualization problems which have been partly due to invalidated generalizations, small sample sizes, and narrowly defined research that has relied on probability techniques. Sundberg (1981) noted a lack of

experimental control of the variables affecting the relationship between cultural variables and the counseling process. Further compounding the problem is that many of these studies have been grossly lacking in cultural sensitivity (Gary, 1981). This has resulted in stereotypical and distorted views of black men and women. Although these issues cause the results to be tenuous and gravely affect the generalizability of the findings, Casas (1984) suggested that this should not dissuade professionals from carefully reviewing and using the literature to stimulate thought and develop hypotheses regarding the role of ethnicity and culture in the therapeutic process.

Closely akin to the methodological issue is the tendency of sociologists and anthropologists to conceptualize blacks as "lacking" in some redeeming quality. This deficit-deficiency model often ascribed to blacks is characterized by unhealthy psychological or relationship functioning (White, 1984). Professionals further promote this by ascribing to some "normal" set of behaviors without regard to sociocultural influences. Psychotherapists and counselors, who seldom have the opportunity to work with black clients in treatment, have relied heavily on the sociocultural information provided by these researchers. The counselors' and psychotherapists' view of blacks as "deviant" may in turn be reflected in their conceptualization and interpretation of black

clients' expression of emotional distress, value systems, and communication styles, particularly with respect to the meaning of rage, disappointment, and distrust (Adebimpe, 1981).

Oyemade and Rosser (1980) also criticized the use of "deficit model" research which compared the performance of blacks and whites while using middle-class whites as the performance standard. Casas (1984) also argued against using the performances of whites as the standard for racial/ethnic minority groups.

These negatively and stereotypically oriented frameworks directed social scientists toward the problems to be studied (for example, delinquency), defined appropriate methodology, and set the stage for the interpretation of the data. Unfortunately, by using these frameworks, social scientists tended to rely exclusively on majority groups as the standard and assumed that anything deviating from this standard was problematic, pathological, deviant, disorganized, or indicative of a deficit. (p. 802)

This view then only serves to perpetuate the minority-inferiority myth. With an emphasis on pathology and middle-class white values of what is desirable and undesirable, the deficit-deficiency model neglects the strengths and competencies of blacks (Sue, 1981) and disavows their right to exist as a distinct and different culture.

To better understand black clients and thus be better able to work more effectively with them, the helping professional must be cognizant of the impact of oppression, differences in language styles, identity concerns, and

coping behaviors. Furthermore, black psychological perspectives must be viewed as sources of strength and value in its own right and not as a deviation from white cultural patterns.

Similarly, black marriages have also been viewed as a subsystem within a broader and dominant system of white values. Because of the distortions of the information that does exist and limited empirical evidence either refuting or substantiating other views, much confusion still exists about the nature of black marital relationships. The primary question that emerges is whether differences in interactional patterns exist between black and white couples. In a very broad sense, this is also the question posed by this research. Although the sample in this study comprises black couples, the discussion of communication patterns in black marriages will be related to the existing literature on both black and non-black couples. These issues, however, will be addressed and discussed from a "difference model" perspective.

There is a need for increased empirical investigation of black marital relationships, particularly in the area of self-disclosure communication which has been identified in the literature as a significant problem between spouses. Additionally, there is a need to test the validity of equity theory and the contention among supporters of the theory that inequity causes distress in relationships.

Evidence supporting the relationship between self-disclosure equity and marital satisfaction for white couples has been well established (Davidson, 1980; Hansen, 1984; Hendrick, 1981; Jorgensen & Gaudy, 1980; Levinger & Senn, 1967). No such evidence exists for black couples. Without a validation of equity theory and its relationship to self-disclosure in black marriages, there will be a greater tendency for counselors and clinicians to generalize the findings from white couples to black couples. Since objective data is virtually nonexistent, therapists have no resource on which to base important decisions regarding therapeutic goals and appropriate intervention strategies. This has resulted in the use of nonempirically-based therapeutic interventions which have often been used indiscriminately and which may or may not have relevance for black clients.

The need for research on the marital functioning of black couples, especially in the area of marital communication, is further evidenced by the finding that the relationship between self-disclosure and marital adjustment may not be linear as some studies have found (Hendrick, 1981; Jorgensen & Gaudy, 1980; Levinger & Senn, 1967) but rather curvilinear (Gilbert, 1976b; Schumm, Barnes, Bollman, Jurich, & Bugaighis, 1986). Thus, even greater impetus is provided for examining the relationship between self-disclosure and marital satisfaction for blacks and other

racial groups rather than generalizing to them from tenuous conclusions about white couples.

Considering that black men and women have encountered a long history of economic and social pressures which have also had a devastating effect on black family survival, it is quite possible that marital needs and expectations have emerged that are different from the American norm.

Harrison (1975) points out that blacks' response to slavery and discrimination may have facilitated the development of adaptive survival behaviors which may include indirect expressions of anger, hostility, distrust, and a reticence to self-disclose feelings (Wolken, Moriwaki, & Williams, 1973; Williams, 1974).

Though there may be more cultural similarities in the needs of black marital partners and white marital partners, perhaps their needs are met and even expressed in different ways. This would indicate vastly different psychotherapeutic marital intervention strategies. On the other hand, if black spouses demonstrate a trend toward convergence of the marital values found in the dominant culture, as Scanzoni (1977) asserts, then it is equally likely that values and perceptions about self-disclosure communication needs are also similar to those of white spouses. Hopefully, this study will shed some light on this issue.

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the role of self-disclosure in black marital relationships by

examining the relationship between behavioral measures of self-disclosure and the marital adjustment of black couples. Additionally, the effect of discrepancies in husbands' and wives' self-disclosure behavior will be examined. Thus, this study will address the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between self-disclosure behavior and marital adjustment for husbands and wives?
2. What dimensions of self-disclosure are most predictive of marital adjustment for husbands and wives (i.e., amount, intimacy, self-reference percent, duration)? How do discrepancies in these areas relate to marital adjustment?
3. What is the relationship between self-disclosure and marital adjustment for spouses who are overbenefited and underbenefited in self-disclosure?

Specific research hypotheses are formulated in the Methodology section of Chapter III.

Definition of Variables

The following operational definitions are used in this study:

Marital Adjustment. Marital adjustment is defined as "a subjective evaluation of a married couple's relationship" (Lewis & Spanier, 1979, p. 268). Lewis & Spanier, however, use this general definition of marital

quality to encompass various concepts referring to the "quality" of an intact marital relationship. Marital adjustment (marital quality) constitutes a range of evaluations on a continuum which reflects a couple's marital interaction. According to Lewis and Spanier, high marital quality (or marital adjustment) is associated with "good judgment, adequate communication, a high level of marital happiness, integration, and a high degree of satisfaction with the relationship" (p. 269). For the purpose of this study, marital adjustment is operationalized as husbands' and wives' scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale which is comprised of four subscales: Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, and Affectional Consensus (Spanier, 1976).

Self-Disclosure Behavior. Self-disclosure behavior is defined as the verbal communication of personal thoughts and feelings about previously selected disclosure topics that are shared with one's partner. Operationally, self-disclosure behavior is defined as the behavioral ratings husbands and wives receive on the Self-Disclosure Coding System (Chelune, 1976) variables of amount, intimacy, self-reference percent, and duration.

Equity. Equity in a relationship exists when both participants receive equal relative gains (Traupman, Petersen, Utne, & Hatfield, 1981). In the case of self-disclosure equity, both spouses disclose equally in the relationship.

Inequity. Inequity in self-disclosure exists when spouses receive more or less self-disclosure than they give. Thus, inequity is defined as discrepancies in husbands' and wives' disclosure levels.

Output. Output is defined as the rated disclosure that a spouse actually gives to his/her partner during the disclosure interaction phase of the study.

Input. Input is defined as the disclosure that a spouse receives from his/her partner during the interaction phase of the study. Thus, each spouse's output score on actual disclosure also serves as his/her input score. For example, if the husband is the focus of the analysis, his wife's output score (which now becomes her input score) is subtracted from his output score. Similarly, if the wife is the focus, her husband's output score (which now becomes his input score) is subtracted from her output score.

Overbenefited. Spouses who are overbenefited in self-disclosure are those who indicate disclosing less to their spouses than their spouses disclose to them. This is indicated by a negative difference between spouses' output scores on the Self-Disclosure Coding System.

Underbenefited. Spouses who are underbenefited in self-disclosure are those who indicate disclosing more to their spouses than their spouses disclose to them. This is defined as a positive difference between spouses' output scores on the Self-Disclosure Coding System.

Organization of the Study

The remainder of this study is organized into four chapters. Chapter II commences with a review of the related literature that examines marital self-disclosure and its relationship to intimacy and the role of self-disclosure in marital satisfaction and adjustment for both black and white couples. The relationship between marital self-disclosure and satisfaction could not be adequately understood without including gender differences. To put the study in proper perspective, self-disclosure is reviewed in the context of equity theory. The effects of equitable and inequitable exchanges in marital disclosure is then discussed. Next, a discussion of the measurement problems and issues associated with marital quality and self-disclosure research is included. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the role of perception in marital research.

Chapter III includes the research design, research hypotheses, and methodology. Subject selection and data collection procedures are also presented. Next, a discussion of tape rating procedures, selection and training of raters, and rater reliability is detailed. To conclude this chapter, data analyses related to the specific hypotheses are presented.

Chapter IV consists of the results of the hypotheses tests. Chapter V discusses the findings, their relevance to past research on self-disclosure in marital

relationships, and implications for marital intervention with black couples. Finally, limitations of the study are addressed along with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The success or failure of marriages often depends more on the interpersonal communication skills of spouses than any other single factor (Ard, 1971). Perhaps this view explains why verbal communication is the most researched and expounded upon aspect of the marital relationship although nonverbal behavior is receiving considerable attention (Gottman, 1979; Hooley & Hahlweg, 1989). Substantial empirical support for the association between these two variables has been demonstrated in previous research (Hicks & Platt, 1970; Horowitz, 1978; Murphy & Mendelson, 1973; Navran, 1967). Marriage counselors and psychotherapists also attest to the importance of communication in marital relationships by incorporating it as a primary therapeutic goal (Haley, 1963; Pierce, 1973; Satir, 1964). Research and therapeutic emphasis, however, has primarily been on relationship maintenance through affective exchanges and positive and negative reinforcement. Only recently has the scope of marital communication research expanded to include interactive and sequential analyses of couples' communication (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Johnson, 1982).

The association between effective communication and marital satisfaction, however, may have been overstated because other factors in the marital relationship may explain the variation in perceived satisfaction better than effective communication variables themselves (Barnes, Schumm, Jurich, & Bollman, 1984). Although the importance of marital communication cannot be diminished, simply "talking about" marital issues in more effective ways may not be sufficient to sustain a mutually satisfying relationship. Other critical variables may be how much of one's intimate self is being shared during the communication and whether the disclosures are equitable in quality and quantity.

Self-Disclosure in Marriage

Although much has been written about the role of communication in marriage, few studies have actually investigated self-disclosure in marriage. Self-disclosure, one type of communication, has been defined as the process of revealing personal information about oneself to others (Jourard & Jaffee, 1970) and has been identified as a key factor in the development of mutually satisfying and stable marital relationships (Burke, Weir, & Harrison, 1976; Derlega & Chaikin, 1975; Gilbert, 1976a, 1976b; Hendrick, 1981; Levinger & Senn, 1967).

Marital self-disclosure, as defined by Jorgensen and Gaudy, (1980), is the "process by which a marriage partner

expresses feelings, perceptions, fears, and doubts of the inner self to the other partner, allowing relatively private and personal information to surface in the relationship that normally would not be revealed in the course of day-to-day interaction" (p. 282). It is this type of sharing that promotes a feeling of intimacy within the marital relationship (Gilbert, 1976b; Waring & Chelune, 1983) and ultimately results in increased satisfaction (Tolstedt, 1982).

Only one study was found where self-disclosure was not significantly related to marital happiness. Hooley and Hahlweg (1989), in their cross-cultural study of German and English couples, found self-disclosure to correlate .17 and .16, respectively, with marital satisfaction. Couples' videotaped discussions of low conflict (English sample) and moderate conflict (German sample) topics were coded to assess those areas of dyadic communication considered important in marital satisfaction. Hooley and Hahlweg did not offer an explanation for their nonsignificant findings.

The Role of Self-Disclosure in Marital Intimacy

Although no consensual definition of intimacy is available, Waring (1981) has operationalized it as a multifaceted interpersonal construct that describes marital quality at a given point in time. Intimacy, according to Waring, is a composite of the following dimensions: affection, expressiveness, compatibility, cohesion,

sexuality, autonomy, and identity. Expressiveness, according to Waring (1981) is "the degree to which thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings are communicated in the marriage" (p. 34). Sexton and Sexton (1982) state that "to be intimate with another is to have access to, and to comprehend his/her innermost character . . . it is seeing other persons in their essential depth and knowing them from inside out, internally and deeply" (p. 1). This implies that only through sharing one's hopes, dreams, fears, strengths, and vulnerabilities can an intimate relationship develop (Calcagno, 1984).

According to Jourard (1959), sharing personal information and feelings is an "index of closeness of the relationship, and of the affection, love, or trust that prevails between two people" (p. 428). It is assumed then that the process of self-disclosure facilitates greater intimacy in the marital relationship partly by providing emotional support and removing uncertainty between partners. Troost (1977) stated that marital disclosure allows spouses to clarify expectations about the future of their relationship. It is assumed, however, that self-disclosure is most facilitative when the listener is perceived as being empathic and also willing to reciprocate self-disclosure (Burke, Weir, & Harrison, 1976). However, when self-disclosure is characterized by negative affect (Gottman, 1979) and negative communication (Hooley &

Hahlweg, 1989), thus resulting in marital dissatisfaction, it is logical to assume that intimacy has likewise suffered.

Because relationships proceed from nonintimate to highly intimate topics of exchange (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Morton, 1978; Tolstedt, 1982), presumably the marital relationship, the closest of all relationships, would include the most intimate topics and disclosure of affect. Morton (1978), however, demonstrated that this relationship is considerably more complex. In a study of strangers and spouses, Morton used a two dimensional coding system to measure self-disclosure intimacy in ongoing interactions. The two intimacy dimensions, "description" (private facts disclosed about oneself) and "evaluation" (personal feelings, judgments, or opinions), were dichotomized into high and low disclosure resulting in a four category system. Morton found that spouses communicated with more "descriptive intimacy" while strangers used more "evaluative intimacy." As suggested by Morton, the finding that spouses disclosed more personal information than strangers but not more personal feelings, indicates that personal feelings may be psychologically safe for strangers and may precede the disclosure of highly personal facts in the development of a relationship.

Although the results do support the social penetration theory that increased acquaintance is associated with

greater disclosure of personal information (Altman & Taylor, 1973), the findings that spouses communicated with less personal feelings and opinions than strangers suggest that the marital relationship may have reached a new level of interaction where affective intimacy is communicated less.

Finally, Morton (1978) found that spouses tended to disclose more private facts both with and without personal feelings, while strangers disclosed more public facts both with and without personal feelings. Another striking difference between strangers and spouses is that strangers tended to guard against disclosing private facts while discussing intimate topics; spouses, on the other hand, tended to disclose private facts while discussing nonintimate topics.

Waring and his colleagues have studied extensively the association between intimacy, self-disclosure, and marital satisfaction. They found that the lack of a close, confiding marital relationship is associated with intrapersonal distress (Hames & Waring, 1980; Waring, 1980) and marital dissatisfaction (Waring, McElrath, Lefcoe, & Weisz, 1981). Brown, Brolchain, and Harris (1975) found that the absence of an intimate relationship and the opportunity for sharing confidences were associated with psychological risk for the development of depression in women already under adverse environmental circumstances.

Waring and Chelune (1983) found evidence suggesting that self-disclosure is a major determinant of marital intimacy and that a linear combination of self-disclosure dimensions account for more than 50% of the variance on four intimacy dimensions and 48% of the variance on the composite intimacy score. In another study (Chelune, Waring, Vosk, Sultan, & Ogden, 1984), 71.7% of the variance in intimacy was accounted for by various self-disclosure dimensions. Waring (1980, 1981) concludes that marital intimacy may indeed be the single most important interpersonal factor that determines marital satisfaction and that failure to develop interpersonal intimacy serves as an etiological factor in marital maladjustment.

Waring (1981) demonstrated the importance of cognitive self-disclosure in the development of marital intimacy. He defined cognitive self-disclosure as the "process of making ourselves known to others by verbally revealing personal thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and assumptions, as well as developing self-awareness" (p. 35). Using a single case study design, Waring used cognitive family therapy and cognitive self-disclosure techniques to enhance the marital intimacy in a relationship where the husband self-referred for depressive symptoms. At the termination of therapy, the husband's depressive symptoms were less and the couple had greatly increased their intimacy score in the areas of conflict resolution, cohesion, and autonomy. The husband's

low pretreatment expressiveness score also matched his wife's high pretreatment score which remained relatively unchanged. Although the limitations of a single case study design are apparent, the importance of self-disclosure in the development of marital intimacy has been amply demonstrated.

Self-Disclosure and Marital Satisfaction

Levinger and Senn (1967) conducted some of the earliest research on the role of self-disclosure in marital relationships. They hypothesized that (1) wives would proportionately disclose more feelings than their husbands, (2) the more satisfied a spouse is, the more that spouse disclosed feelings to his/her partner, and (3) that there would be a positive correlation between spouses' proportion of feelings disclosed.

Levinger and Senn conceptualized satisfaction in two ways: (1) satisfaction with the marriage and (2) a spouse's "mean favorability" (the proportion of positive or negative feelings) toward nine objects of marital communication. The favorability objects included family residence, one's own parents, one's spouse's parents, one's own work, one's own spouse's work, handling of money in the family, sex relations with one's spouse, one's own personality, and one's own spouse's personality.

Spouses were asked to indicate, on a scale from 0% to 100%, (1) how favorable they felt about the nine objects of

communication, (2) the proportion of their own feelings, both pleasant and unpleasant, they disclose to their partners, and (3) their ratings of their spouses' disclosure to them. Separate correlations were then computed between spouses' reports of their own pleasant and unpleasant disclosures and satisfaction (e.g., mean favorability to the objects of communication and satisfaction with the marriage).

Support was obtained for all three hypotheses but with mixed results. Wives were found to be significantly higher disclosers of feelings than their husbands but this was true for reports of input only. Specifically, husbands reported that their wives disclosed more feelings to them while wives reported that husbands disclosed less. When disclosure output was considered, there was no significant difference between husbands' and wives' reports of their own disclosure to their spouses. Disclosure input was still higher for wives than husbands when both unpleasant and pleasant feelings were considered, but this finding was more pronounced for reports of unpleasant feelings. This trend in husband-wife differences still held even for comparisons of couples undergoing marital and family counseling with those similar in social characteristics but who were not undergoing counseling.

The second hypothesis, that spouses' self-disclosure would be directly related to marital satisfaction, was also

confirmed but with qualifications. For husbands, satisfaction was significantly and positively related to their own disclosure of positive feelings (output) as well as their report of their wives' disclosure of positive feelings (input) to them. However, the association between husbands' satisfaction and their wives' disclosure was more significant than the satisfaction husbands' found when they disclosed to their wives. Wives' marital satisfaction was significant and highly correlated with husbands' disclosure of pleasant feelings (input) but not their own disclosure of pleasant feelings (output), although a low positive relationship existed. This suggests that spouses are more likely to report higher marital satisfaction when their spouses disclose to them than when they disclose to their spouses. Disclosure of unpleasant feelings was not significantly related to marital satisfaction for husbands nor wives, although low positive correlations were found. Satisfaction, then, seems to be more related to what couples perceive they receive from their spouses (input) than what they report giving (output).

Levinger's (1965, c.f. Levinger & Senn, 1967) findings indirectly support this assumption. He found that more satisfied spouses were less likely to discuss negative feelings, especially those pertaining to their spouses. However, satisfied spouses were more likely to discuss

negative feelings associated with external events than were less satisfied spouses.

One interesting finding in the Levinger and Senn (1967) data that was not emphasized in their results was that husbands' marital satisfaction was significantly and positively related to wives' report of their husbands' disclosure of pleasant feelings to them. This suggests a type of reward system operating within the marital relationship when wives' perceive that their husbands have disclosed pleasant feelings to them. Perhaps husbands, who are the recipients of the marital rewards, are further encouraged by their wives' positive behaviors toward them which indirectly impact on their satisfaction.

The foregoing discussion indicated that more satisfied spouses have learned to restrain their communication of unpleasant marital topics. To examine this assumption, Levinger and Senn (1967) asked spouses to rate "how important" it was for husbands and wives to talk to each other about the previously mentioned communication topics. For both Agency couples (those in counseling for marital or family difficulties) and School couples (those with elementary school children and comparable on other social characteristics), disclosure of pleasant and unpleasant feelings was associated with the importance assigned to the communication topic. There was a tendency for School couples to disclose more pleasant feelings than unpleasant

feelings about important topics. Agency couples did not demonstrate any appreciable difference between pleasant and unpleasant feelings with regard to important versus unimportant communication topics. The researchers conclude that "selective disclosure of feelings seems more beneficial to marital harmony than indiscriminate catharsis" (p. 246).

Levinger and Senn (1967) also found support for the mutuality of disclosure between spouses. For both husbands and wives, they found high positive correlations between what spouses reported that they disclosed to their partners and what they perceived their partners disclosed to them. The correlations remained high even when pleasant and unpleasant disclosures were considered. Evidence of mutuality in disclosure was further supported by the finding that the higher the disclosure output was from one spouse, the higher was the partner's output. The same relationship held for disclosure input. Again, what spouses said their partners disclosed to them (input) was more highly correlated than what spouses reported that they disclosed to their partners (output).

Levinger and Senn conclude that the perceptions spouses have of their partner's disclosure will reveal more about the marital relationship than spouses' reports of their own disclosure. They reason that input is more easily distorted than output and that opposite-sex partners tend

to maintain an idealized perception of communication exchanges in their relationship. Even though the exception for mutual disclosure may be violated, spouses may continue to perceive the disclosures as remaining stable and consistent.

Supporting Levinger and Senn's finding of reciprocal disclosure between spouses, Burke, Weir, and Harrison (1976) found a significant positive correlation between husbands' and wives' disclosure of tension in general and within the marital relationship. However, husbands and wives differed significantly on the likelihood that they would disclose problems and tensions to their spouses.

Although the Levinger and Senn (1967) study provided important data in understanding marital disclosure and satisfaction, there were some methodological problems. First, the authors did not use a standardized instrument to measure self-disclosure. Instead, they simply asked couples to indicate their favorable feelings toward nine topics of communication and to indicate the proportion of pleasant and unpleasant feelings disclosed to and received from their spouses. Second, marital satisfaction was assessed one year prior to the assessment of self-disclosure. This introduced the possibility of reliability contamination such as maturation and history. Third, Levinger and Senn combined their 15 clinical couples and their 17 nonclinical couples. Thus, valuable information

regarding the characteristics of clinical and nonclinical couples was lost because the group sample sizes were too small for separate analyses. Thus, the analyses could have been based on a skewed sample.

Hendrick (1981) asked 51 couples to complete two measures of marital satisfaction and Taylor and Altman's (1966b) Social Penetration Scale, which was used to measure self-disclosure. Results of the study indicated a significant positive correlation between couples' self-disclosure and both measures of marital satisfaction. Hendrick also found that both husbands' and wives' reports of marital satisfaction were significantly related to their partner's self-disclosure.

To assess how well self-disclosure predicted marital satisfaction, Hendrick computed separate analyses for husbands and wives and for couples. Again, self-disclosure was found to be a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. When spouses' were considered as individual subjects, self-disclosure accounted for 10% and 25% of the variance on the two measures of marital satisfaction. When spouses' scores were combined, 27% and 28% of the variance were explained.

Quite interestingly, Hendrick (1981) found that husbands blamed wives and wives blamed themselves for the preponderance of problems experienced in their marriage. There was a high positive correlation between husbands' and

wives' view of the problems wives contributed to the marriage; there was low agreement between spouses regarding the husband's contribution of problems. The author speculates that this finding is consistent with traditional sex roles where women have been given responsibility for relationship maintenance.

To further understand the reason wives are perceived as contributing more problems to the marital relationship is the finding that wives typically expressed greater emotion (Notarius & Johnson, 1982), disclosed more (Burke, Weir, & Harrison, 1976) than their husbands, and communicated more highly personal feelings and private facts (Morton, 1978). Thus, it is easier to credit wives with "nagging" and for wives to view their disclosures as "demanding," particularly when the husband does not readily reciprocate. Notarius and Johnson (1982) provide some support for this notion. They found that during a discussion of salient relationship issues, that wives' speech was less neutral and more negative than husbands' speech. There was no difference between spouses on positive communication. As listeners, wives also displayed more negative nonverbal behaviors than their husbands.

Notarius and Johnson further found that wives reciprocated their husband's positive and negative communication while husbands did not. Husbands, on the other hand, tended to reciprocate their wives' positive

communication with neutral responses. Husbands showed no consistent response when their wives communicated with negative speech.

With regard to blaming wives for relationship difficulties, the foregoing discussion may be interpreted to mean that during marital communication, wives may escalate their emotional expressiveness to solicit a response from their husbands. This may be especially true of negative emotional expression. Thus, wives may be expressing frustration at their husbands' seemingly "detached" manner, while husbands may be responding to their wives' "overreaction." In the final analysis, both spouses may perceive that it was the wife who caused the situation to escalate out of control.

The role that the expression of emotion plays in the marital relationship was demonstrated by Davidson (1980). He investigated the disclosure of affect in the marital relationship and found it to be significantly related to the marital adjustment of both spouses. He also found significant positive relationship between the amount of love, happiness, and sadness that is disclosed by one's spouse and one's marital adjustment. In other words, the marital satisfaction of husbands and wives is related to their spouse's disclosure of feelings to them. The disclosure of anger from one's spouse was not related to one's marital adjustment. This is consistent with Levinger

and Senn's (1967) finding that the disclosure of unpleasant feelings is not related to marital adjustment.

Another finding from the Davidson (1980) study was a significant difference between husbands' and wives' output of love disclosure and their spouses' marital adjustment. It appears that husbands' disclosure of love was more important for the marital adjustment of wives than was wives' disclosure of love to their husbands.

Unlike the majority of marital self-disclosure research, which relied upon self-report measures, Hansen (1984), and Hansen and Schuldt (1984) used both self-report and behavioral indices of self-disclosure. To assess spouses' self-report of their self-disclosure, they used Jourard's Self-Disclosure Questionnaire, but modified its instructions by asking spouses if they would disclose various topics to their spouse in the future. Hansen, and Hansen and Schuldt found that husbands' and wives' disclosure to their spouses (output) was positively related to and predictive of their own marital satisfaction. Wives' disclosure to their husbands (input) was also found to be a positive predictor of husbands' marital satisfaction, but husbands' disclosure to their wives was not a significant predictor of satisfaction for wives. Hansen and Schuldt (1984) and Hansen (1984) also assessed husbands' and wives' self-disclosure behaviorally. Using Chelune's (1976) Self-Disclosure Coding System, they

assessed spouses' verbal disclosure on three basic self-disclosure parameters--amount, intimacy, and duration. They found that none of the behavioral measures of self-disclosure positively predicted marital satisfaction. They did find, however, that the duration of time husbands spent disclosing to wives was a significant negative predictor of marital satisfaction for both spouses. For wives, there was no significant association. As the authors indicated, the dearth of behavioral research in the area of marital self-disclosure would make it impossible to provide a definitive interpretation of this finding.

Behavioral measures of self-disclosure have been used to discriminate clinical from nonclinical couples, but the analyses have basically been confined to looking at group differences. Using the Self-Disclosure Coding System, Chelune, Sultan, Vosk, Ogden, and Waring (1984) found that clinical couples spoke for shorter periods of time and with less congruence between their content and associated affect than did nonclinical couples. Chelune et al. conclude that for clinical couples, how they communicate rather than what they communicate will distinguish them from nonclinical couples.

The limited research using behavioral indices have typically used marital intimacy as the dependent measure with self-disclosure parameters as predictors (Chelune, Waring, Vosk, Sultan, & Ogden, 1984; Waring & Chelune, 1983;

Waring, 1981). However, research using behavioral measures of self-disclosure as predictors of marital satisfaction is still in its infancy. Additional research investigating the adequacy of behavioral measures of self-disclosure as predictors in marital satisfaction is needed.

Reciprocity of Self-Disclosure in the Marital Relationship

The few studies investigating reciprocity in long-term relationship indicate that as the marital relationship progresses in intimacy, spouses tend not to reciprocate their partners' disclosure (Altman, 1973; Cozby, 1973; Morton, 1978). Using social penetration theory (Altman, 1973; Altman & Taylor, 1973), which postulates a decrease in self-disclosure reciprocity in ongoing relationships, Morton (1978) hypothesized that spouses, relative to strangers, would demonstrate less reciprocity in intimacy. Findings revealed that initially couples demonstrated an equivalent amount of disclosure reciprocity which began to decrease over time. On the other hand, reciprocity in stranger dyads remained stable across trials.

According to Altman (1973), a high level of disclosure reciprocity occurs in the early stages of a relationship but then declines over time, with a higher level of reciprocity reoccurring only under special circumstances. Following Altman's reasoning, Morton (1978) suggested that the decline in spouses' disclosure reciprocity was related to the "initial exposure to the novel experimental

situation . . . prompting spouses to return temporarily to the structure and guidelines for interaction provided by reciprocity, but then to gradually abandon this as familiar dyad-specific interaction patterns re-emerge" (p. 77). This suggests that married couples may have developed other mechanisms for regulating their disclosure exchange.

Factors Influencing Self-Disclosure in Marriage

Several variables have been found to influence self-disclosure in marital relationships. Hendrick (1981) found the length of time a couple had been married was significantly and negatively correlated with self-disclosure. This was true, however, for couples' summed scores and for wives but not for husbands. Hendrick reasoned that with increased years of marriage, disclosure becomes less important since couples tend to know each other well and are more satisfied with their marital relationship. It would also appear that the longer a couple has been married, the more knowledgeable and trusting spouses become of each other. With a history of intimate disclosures, spouses are likely to become more trusting. Although self-disclosure may remain a significant factor in the marital relationship, it is no longer a necessary ingredient. A multivariate analysis would have provided a clearer understanding of the relationship between self-disclosure, marital satisfaction, and length of marriage.

Hendrick did not speculate on the reasons for less disclosure from husbands. It is reasonable to assume though that husbands' disclosure has remained relatively stable throughout the relationship, therefore decreases in disclosure with length of marriage may be significant. This also raises some interesting questions about expectations for disclosure equity in relationships and trust as an influencing factor.

Hendrick (1981) also found a significant positive relationship between marital disclosure and a couple's educational level. Since educational level was combined for spouses in a marital dyad, only a generalized view of the association between education and marital disclosure is provided. It would have been interesting to note the effect of discrepancies in spouse's educational level.

Self-Disclosure Equity and Marital Adjustment

Social exchange theory (Homans, 1958, 1974; Thibault & Kelly, 1959) has emerged within this decade as a major theoretical framework in which to study ongoing intimate relationships. The theory postulates that individuals will seek to maximize their rewards while minimizing their costs. Thus, individuals will maintain a relationship as long as participants feel that they are each receiving what they deserve based on their expectations and perceptions of the cost versus available alternatives (Thibault & Kelly, 1959).

Problems arise, however, when the social exchange process is applied directly to the marital relationship. McDonald (1981) states that the structural, cognitive, and temporal dimensions of the relationships have been deemphasized in sociological exchange theory. He advocates consideration of marital norms, role expectations, and obligations when applying social exchange theory to the study of marital relationships. This is especially important since no one likes to think of the marital relationship as a system reduced to carefully measured rewards and costs.

Equity theory, an extension of social exchange theory, is helpful in conceptualizing exchange within the marital relationship and may also be helpful in explaining how equity in self-disclosure may mediate a spouse's perception of marital satisfaction. Equity theory proposes that when "individuals find themselves participating in inequitable relationships, they will become distressed. The more inequitable the relationship, the more distress individuals will feel" (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978, p. 6). This suggests the existence of a point in which marital disclosure is optimal and that any imbalance or inequity in what is shared between partners will result in a less satisfying marital relationship.

Schafer and Keith (1980) provide further support for relationship inequity and distress. They found that

husbands and wives who perceived equity in the performance of their roles were less depressed than those who perceived inequity. Implications are that spouses who are overbenefited (recipients of more than they give) or underbenefited (recipients of less than they give) are equally likely to experience marital distress.

In relating self-disclosure and marital adjustment to equity theory, Davidson, Balswick, and Halverson (1983) did indeed find that discrepancies in spousal affective self-disclosure was related to lower marital adjustment for both husbands and wives. This view was further supported by Chelune, Rosenfeld, and Waring (1985), who found that nondistressed spouses showed greater self-disclosure equity than distressed spouses.

As point of speculation, it is likely that an imbalance in partners' disclosure level creates an atmosphere of distrust and uncertainty. Spouses who disclose more than their partners may be perceived as "nagging" or complaining unnecessarily, selfish, and demanding or weak and overly dependent. Spouses who disclose less than their partners may be perceived by the partner as untrustworthy and selfish. Whenever there is extreme stress on the marital system, precipitated by an inequitable relationship, a state of disequilibrium occurs. To stabilize and maintain the relationship, marital partners will then seek to restore the relationship to a state of equilibrium.

(Jackson, 1968, p. 2) by placing limits on their disclosures (Rutledge, 1966).

Such is the case with equity theory which predicts that "individuals who discover they are in an inequitable relationship will attempt to eliminate their distress by restoring equity. The greater the inequity that exists, the more distress they will feel, and the harder they will try to restore equity" (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978, p. 6).

Relationship equity can be restored in two ways: actual equity or psychological equity. Actual equity refers to producing actual changes in the circumstances of the relationship. Walster, Walster, and Berscheid (1978) refer to actual equity as "actually altering his own or his partner's relative gains in appropriate ways" (p. 18). This may be accomplished by lowering or increasing one's outcomes (i.e., extramarital relationships). When actual change is not feasible, partners may resort to a wide range of psychological defenses in an attempt to restore psychological equity to the relationship. This may be done by distorting reality in appropriate ways (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). A person can resort to denial and rationalization (rationalize that the inequitable relationship is indeed equitable) or outright justification that the inequity is deserved (Davidson, Balswick, & Halverson, 1983). Psychological equity can also be

restored by minimizing output, exaggerating outcomes, exaggerating one's partner's input or by minimizing the outcomes of one's partner (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978).

Limited research exists that describe how spouses restore balance in an inequitable relationship. What little is known about restoring actual equity in intimate relationships has been contributed by Walster, Traupman, and Walster (1978), who found that underbenefited spouses were most likely to engage in extramarital relationships. Davidson (1980) and Davidson, Balswick, and Halverson, (1983) have contributed the only research on restoring psychological equity when self-disclosure inequity exists. Findings from these studies indicate that spouses who report high marital satisfaction and who are underbenefited in affective self-disclosure tend to overestimate their spouses' input. Spouses who are overbenefited tend to underestimate their spouses' input.

It is plausible that the psychological scenario is quite different for black couples who may perceive self-disclosure inequity in their relationships but who restore balance in a manner unlike that of white couples in previous studies. After mentally measuring their partners' and their own input versus output, black spouses may also resort to justification and rationalization as a means of dealing with the distress precipitated by disclosure

inequity. The content of their justification and rationalization may differ. For instance, black wives may reason that "they can't have it all,"--that there are other satisfying aspects of the relationship which outweigh their need for marital self-disclosure. They, too, may minimize the importance of self-disclosure by reasoning that "they at least talk" or "respect their partners' right to silence" or are supporting their partner in fulfilling his need to appear strong and masculine.

Another possibility for the tolerance of self-disclosure inequity in black relationships is what Benjamin (1982) refers to as Type A and Type B relationship orientations. Benjamin observed that Type A oriented black women have been socialized to be very relationship-oriented--to define and evaluate herself by the presence or absence of male attention. In relationships, the nature of the demands she makes are more instrumental. That is, she looks to the male to take care of her and in turn, she gives him devotion. The Type B woman is more likely to place expressive functions at the forefront of relationships. Being career-oriented and able to provide for her own financial needs, she is more likely to make more emotional demands on her male partner. Thus, she is more likely to expect openness, disclosure, and emotional support, for it is this emotional exchange that she desires in a relationship. When there is an absence of emotional

exchange, she is most likely to feel that there is inequity in the relationship, and therefore experience dissatisfaction. However, it also stands to reason that with the reputed shortage of black males available for relationships (Staples, 1985) that even Type A and Type B women may be hesitant to request from their partners a level of expressiveness that they perceive to be either stressful or impossible for their male partners to give.

Implications are that white couples in the Davidson (1980) and Davidson, Balswick, and Halverson (1983) studies were unconsciously motivated, through overestimating or underestimating their spouse's disclosure, to restore self-disclosure equity to the relationship. This study suggests that while black couples may use unconsciously motivated means to restore self-disclosure equity, that they are apt to alter their expectation for self-disclosure equity or utilize defenses such as rationalization and justification. So what is referred to in the equity literature as restoring psychological equity may, for black spouses, actually be resolving dissonance through a series of conscious adaptation strategies. This merely suggests that couples, in general, alike have the need for relationship equity but the process by which they psychologically restore balance to an inequitable relationship may vary.

As suggested by equity theory, spouses expect equity in their contributions to the relationship. Despite what we would like to believe, couples maintain a mental checklist of rewards and costs, trade resources, and expect equity at least in resource exchanges (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). This suggests that the resource need not be the same as long as spouses perceive that the trade-off is comparable in "weight." In the case of black females, who typically are not the recipients of spousal self-disclosure, this point may be especially poignant. Where then is the source of balance in black marriages?

Hypotheses

The relationship between marital adjustment (dependent variable) and selected self-disclosure dimensions (independent variables) will be ascertained by testing the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is no relationship between husbands' marital adjustment and (1) their own self-disclosure behavior, and (2) their wives' self-disclosure behavior.

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between wives' marital adjustment and (1) their own self-disclosure behavior, and (2) their spouses' self-disclosure behavior.

Hypothesis 3: There is no difference in husbands' and wives' marital adjustment associated with their income, education, and years married.

Hypothesis 4: There is no difference in husbands' and wives' self-disclosure behavior associated with their income, education, and years married.

Hypothesis 5: There is no relationship between husbands' marital adjustment and differences in their own and their spouses' self-disclosure output.

Hypothesis 6: There is no relationship between wives' marital adjustment and differences in their own and their spouses' self-disclosure output.

Hypothesis 7: There is no difference in the marital adjustment of husbands or wives as a result of being overbenefited, underbenefited, or equal in self-disclosure output.

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between both spouses' marital adjustment and selected self-disclosure dimensions (Amount, Self-Reference Percent, Intimacy, Duration). Furthermore, this study examined the predictive power of self-disclosure, differences in spouses' self-disclosure output, and demographic variables (years married, education, income, and age) on the dependent variable, marital adjustment. The sample consisted of 48 black couples from Gainesville, Florida who responded to various solicitation appeals.

Couples were asked to discuss with their spouse personal thoughts and feelings regarding a set of preselected self-disclosure topics. Couples' self-disclosure dialogues were then coded using the Self-Disclosure Coding Scale (Chelune, 1976). Following the discussion of self-disclosure topics, each spouse completed the following self-report measures: (1) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), (2) Marital Conventionalization Scale (Edmonds, 1967), and (3) the Personal Data Questionnaire. The data was analyzed using univariate and multivariate factorial designs.

The remainder of this chapter includes a description of the (1) subjects used in this study, (2) research materials and procedures, (3) selection and training of coders, (4) interrater reliability, and (5) research results.

Method

Participants

Subjects. Fifty-three black couples from Gainesville, Florida volunteered to participate in this study. However, data from forty-eight couples were usable. All 96 subjects used in the final study were native Americans of African descent. These couples were solicited through a variety of sources: city and community newspaper stories featuring the research (18.75%); community bulletin boards (8.33%); church announcements (27.08%); and referrals from participants and friends of the researcher (45.83%). For inclusion in this study, all couples were required to be married for at least one year and currently living in the same household with their spouse.

Husbands ranged in age from 20 to 67 years, with a mean age of 35.85 years (S.D. = 9.59); wives ranged in age from 20 to 51 years with a mean age of 34.23 years (S.D. = 8.50). Couples had been married for an average of 9.67 years (S.D. = 8.62) with a range of 1 year to 32 years. The most frequent educational level for husbands was a four-year degree; for wives, the most frequent educational

level was a graduate degree. Annual salaries for husbands varied from no income to above \$40,000. However, the most frequent income group for husbands was \$15,001-\$20,000. For wives, their income ranged from no income to \$30,001-\$35,000, with the most frequent income group being \$20,001-\$25,000. (See Table 3.1 for the frequency distribution of income and education levels.)

Experimenters. The experimenters in this study included a black female, who was also the researcher, and a black male. Both experimenters were graduate students in Counseling Psychology.

Instruments

All subjects completed the following self-report inventories: (1) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), (2) Marital Conventionalization Scale--Short Form (Edmonds, 1967), and (3) a personal data questionnaire.

Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) (Appendix G) is a 32-item self-report rating scale which assesses the overall quality of adjustment in married and nonmarried dyadic relationships. It is comprised of four subscales: Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, Dyadic Consensus, and Affectional Expression. The combined scores from the four subscales comprise the composite marital adjustment score.

Spanier and Filsinger (1983) provide the following definitions for the DAS subscales:

Table 3.1Frequency Distribution of Husbands' and Wives' Income and Educational Levels

	<u>Response Freqency</u>	
	Husbands (n = 48)	Wives (n = 47)
<u>Income</u>		
No income	2 (4.2%)	4 (8.5%)
Under 5,000	1 (2.1%)	2 (4.3%)
5,000-10,000	3 (6.2%)	4 (8.5%)
10,001-15,000	4 (8.3%)	5 (10.6%)
15,001-20,000	12 (25.0%)	8 (17.0%)
20,001-25,000	8 (16.7%)	15 (31.9%)
25,001-30,000	4 (8.3%)	5 (10.6%)
30,001-35,000	8 (16.7%)	3 (6.4%)
35,001-40,000	3 (6.2%)	1 (2.1%)
Above 40,000	3 (6.2%)	0
<u>Education</u>		
Less than a high school diploma	1 (2.1%)	0
High school diploma	7 (14.6%)	2 (4.3%)
High school equivalency degree	0	0
Professional training certificate	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.1%)
Some college	8 (16.7%)	9 (19.1%)
AA or AS degree	7 (14.6%)	9 (19.1%)
BA or BS degree	12 (25.0%)	9 (19.1%)
Graduate study	4 (8.3%)	4 (8.5%)
Graduate degree	8 (16.7%)	13 (27.7%)

Dyadic Consensus (the degree to which the couple agrees on matters of importance to the relationship); Dyadic Cohesion (the degree to which the couple engages in activities together); Dyadic Satisfaction (the degree to which the couple is satisfied with the present state of the relationship and is committed to its continuance); and Affectional Expression (the degree to which the couple is satisfied with the expression of affection and sex in the relationship). (p. 157)

The DAS was originally developed as a measurement and methodological refinement of the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) (Locke & Wallace, 1959), the most widely used assessment of marital adjustment. Spanier (1976) stated that few previous measures demonstrated adequate reliability and validity. He criticized the MAT as lacking in conceptual accuracy and perhaps not reflective of more contemporary attitudes toward marriage. Second only to the Locke-Wallace, the DAS is ever gaining in popularity as the preferred scale for assessing marital adjustment (Spanier & Thompson, 1982) and has been recognized for its brevity, extensive normative data (O'Leary & Arias, 1987), and measurement properties (Fitzpatrick, 1988).

In Spanier's (1976) initial development of the DAS, he included all items from the 17 scales that previously had been used to assess marital adjustment or a related concept. This list included approximately 300 items. After eliminating duplicate items and other items that were judged to lack content validity, and including a few other items that Spanier thought had been ignored, 200 items were

found suitable for inclusion in the questionnaire. This questionnaire was then administered to 218 married persons of working and middle-class backgrounds, who lived in central Pennsylvania. Questionnaires were also mailed to every person in Centre County, Pennsylvania who had obtained a divorce decree within the previous 12 months. (Spanier did not indicate the racial composition of his sample.) After eliminating other items that failed to discriminate married and divorced couples, those items with low variance and high skewness, and those with low factor loadings, a final list of 32 items remained. These items comprise the present Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Various measures of validity were established during the initial development of the DAS (Spanier, 1976). Content validity was established by having three judges systematically rate whether the content of the scale actually measured the behaviors and attitudes it was intended to measure. Criterion-related validity was established for each DAS item by discriminating between married and divorced couples ($p < .001$) using a t-test of mean differences. There was also a significant difference ($p. < .001$) between the mean total scale score for married ($M = 114.8$; S.D. = 17.8) and divorced individuals ($M = 70.7$; S.D. = 23.8).

To determine construct validity, Spanier correlated the DAS with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale (Locke & Wallace, 1959). He found a correlation of .86 for

married individuals and .88 for divorced individuals ($p. < .001$). To further establish construct validity, a factor analysis was run on the final 32 scale items resulting in the four interrelated subscales previously mentioned. The four subscale factor structure of the DAS was replicated in a 3-year follow-up study which used couples from the same geographical area as the original study (Spanier & Thompson, 1982). Confirmatory factor analysis procedures supported Spanier's original factors which accounted for 94% of the covariance among the items.

Some researchers, however, have failed to demonstrate the existence of Spanier's four factor structure. Sharpley and Cross (1982) suggested that the full-scale DAS was unnecessary in discriminating distressed and nondistressed couples. They suggested that a single six-item dyadic adjustment factor could just as reliably discriminate between these couple groups. Similarly, Antill and Cotton (1982) also found the existence of a strong dyadic adjustment factor. Although they did not find evidence of an Affectional Expression subscale, they did find some evidence for the other three DAS subscales.

Similarly, Sharpley and Cross (1982) did not find support for the four factor structure, but the presence of one underlying factor. This single "adjustment" factor accounted for 73% of the variance. They indicated that while the overall scale is valid and reliable, many of the 32 items are unnecessary in discriminating distressed and

nondistressed couples. They suggested that a one or six-item version of the DAS will reliably classify subjects' adjustment to their marital relationship. Support for this finding was provided by Sharpley and Rogers (1984) who found that the abbreviated scale also differentiated Australian individuals who were satisfied in their relationships.

The DAS full-scale score ranges from 0 to 151. No cut-off scores were provided for respondents with high versus low levels of marital adjustment. Currently, there are no studies available that suggest an empirically sound method for categorizing couple scores as normal or distressed (Spanier & Filsinger, 1983).

To measure internal consistency reliability, Spanier (1976) used Cronbach's coefficient alpha which revealed an overall reliability of .96. Reliabilities for the four subscales ranged from .73 to .96. Three years later, a new sample was studied from the same geographical area (Spanier & Thompson, 1982). Again the Cronbach's coefficient alpha was high yielding a reliability estimate of .91.

One criticism of the DAS was related to item weights. Norton (1983) criticized that the DAS inappropriately applied unit weights to the scale items by treating continuous and dichotomous scale items equivalently. Thus, when these scores are added to produce a total scale score, the characteristics of the couple's marital relationship is blurred. In other words, two couples may receive an

identical score yet differ significantly in their marital relationship. This criticism, however, is not likely to significantly effect the total score since only two DAS items are dichotomous.

In an effort to clarify the continuous "unit" versus "weighted" method of scoring, Hunt (1978) correlated combinations of weighted and unit scores for both the DAS and MAT. He found high reliability between (.94 for husbands and .92 for wives) the original weighted MAT and the revised MAT using unit weights. The correlation dropped (.77 for husbands and .73 for wives) when the weighted full scale MAT and the continuous unit weights from the 11 DAS items, that were identical to those in the MAT, were used. When continuous unit weights were applied to both the MAT and DAS, correlations improved to .93 for both men and women. This suggested that the use of continuous weights would make the two scales quite similar.

Hunt stated that because self-report measures of marital quality tap the emotional-feeling aspects of each partner, that partners are more likely to apply differential weights to scale items based on their values, attitudes, and experiences. According to Hunt, ". . . the respondent's previous experience with the results (or rewards) from either agreement or disagreement underlies his/her valuing, editing, and weighting of the items and their alternatives" (Hunt, 1978, p. 254). He concluded that because little is known about the differential weights

applied by partners, that it would be futile to apply weights to "internal measures." Additionally, because social desirability responding is so pervasive in self-report measures of marital adjustment, it is likely to overshadow any weighting procedure. Thus, Hunt concluded that the DAS was an improvement over the Locke-Wallace which uses weighted scores.

Norton (1983) further criticized the DAS because of Spanier's decision to eliminate highly skewed items from the initial pool of items. Although this procedure may have resulted in a normally distributed group of items, Norton stated that the resulting items may be less reflective of marital adjustment. Consequently, the DAS may have eliminated important items relating to love, sex, and affection since these areas may be more prone to skewness and social desirability responding (Norton, 1983).

Because weighted scores assume consistency of marital values across populations, weighted scores were deemed an inappropriate method for determining scale scores for black spouses who were not included in the standardization sample. There has been no empirical research to indicate that black spouses attach the same degree of importance to marital issues as those non-black spouses who were used in the original study. The use of weighted scores could result in gross over- or under-estimations of black spouses' marital adjustment. This problem would become even more likely if weights were added to items that were

already skewed. Spanier (1976) provided some support for this statement by his finding that item ratings of "most important" tended to be skewed in that direction.

Additionally, generalizability is compromised when the weights are applied to a specific sample. It appears that continuous unit weights would be preferable particularly when there is some question about the validity of the measure being used. Thus, the DAS was judged to be less "sample specific" than the MAT which uses item weights to generate its scale scores.

The issue of over- and under-estimation of marital adjustment scores has also been introduced by other researchers. Mejia (1981) found that the MAT scores obtained by Hispanic clinical couples were somewhat higher than the scores obtained in a similar study using non-Hispanic clinical couples. Furthermore, Mejia found that "the mean scores of the Hispanic non-clinical couples . . . were somewhat higher than the 'cut-off' scores for non-Hispanic non-clinical couples established in the validation studies of the MAS [Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test]" (p. 25). Tucker, James, and Turner (1985) found that the white couples in their sample had significantly higher marital adjustment scores ($M = 112.13$) on the MAT than their black couples ($M = 98.51$). In a cross-cultural study of marital satisfaction of English couples, Hooley and Hahlweg (1989) used the DAS but did not report reliability and validity on their sample. They did report a mean of 105

for the individual DAS scores which was lower than the mean of 114.8 found for married couples in Spanier's validation sample. This suggests extreme caution when using marital adjustment measures to compare the marital adjustment scores of different ethnic/racial groups unless previous reliability and validity has been established. Although a measure may discriminate between couple groups (i.e., clinical and nonclinical couples) from the same ethnic/racial group, as was the case in Mejia's (1981) study, it may be an inadequate measure for comparing across ethnic/racial groups. Because the DAS (and the MAT) likely excluded blacks from its original standardization pool, caution in score interpretation is suggested.

Marital Conventionalization Scale. It has been well documented that measures of marital adjustment and satisfaction have high potential for response bias and social desirability responding (Edmonds, Withers, & Dibatista, 1972; Jemail, 1977; Murstein & Beck, 1972). Edmonds (1967) criticized marital adjustment measures, such as the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test, as being heavily contaminated by social desirability. For instance, he contended that the item weights on the Locke-Wallace are in favor of respondents who endorse socially desirable responses and against those who think critically and answer honestly about their marriage. "The net result of such scoring techniques is that one must be either insightless or dishonest in order to give those answers that are given

the highest weights" (Edmonds, 1967, p. 682). This led Edmonds to question whether confidence could be placed in any self-report measure, particularly those related to the marital relationship, that dealt with highly ego-involved and socially valued areas of life.

These concerns prompted Edmonds (1967) to develop the Marital Conventionalization Scale (MCS) (Appendix H), an instrument which measures the ". . . extent to which a person distorts the appraisal of his marriage in the direction of social desirability" (p. 681). Edmonds contends that most of the distortion is unintended and at best, marginally conscious. Thus, conventionalization, according to Edmonds, involves fooling oneself rather than others.

The Marital Conventionalization Scale is the only scale developed specifically to assess social desirability responding in marital interaction studies. The scale items were developed such that the most highly valued aspects of marriage would be tapped (i.e., love, happiness, harmony, absence of regret). Disguise items, consisting of 16 items taken from the Burgess-Wallin Marital Happiness Scale, were randomly interspersed with the 34 original marital conventionalization items. Fourteen of these items included characteristics that could easily exist in any marriage.

The original scale was given to 100 randomly selected married persons who were then students attending a major

Southern University. Edmonds (1967) did not report the racial composition of his sample. To measure item discrimination, biserial correlation coefficients were then computed between each of the 50 items and the total scale score. The disguise items were not scored for conventionalization. The mean number of conventionalized responses was 12; the standard deviation was 8.

In order to develop a shorter but valid version of the scale, the 15 most discriminating items were weighted in direct proportion to the amount of variance it contributed to the total scale. The weighted scores for the shorter version of the scale were then correlated with the weighted scores from the longer version of the scale. A product-moment correlation of .99 was obtained. A mean of 34 and a standard deviation of 30 was obtained for the short scale. Edmonds explained that the obvious skewness of the scores in the short scale was due solely to the large number of zero item scores.

As a validity check, Edmonds correlated both the short and long scales with the MMPI Lie Scale. Correlations of .44 and .39 were obtained for the long and short scale, respectively. Edmonds reasoned that the correlations were low because of the lack of discriminatory power with the Lie Scale which yielded a mean of 3 and a standard deviation of 1.

Since the initial development of the MCS, no studies have been found which attempted to reassess reliability and

validity. As a matter of fact, most past studies of marital relationships have simply ignored the social desirability phenomenon. Perhaps this was related to the finding of Murstein and Beck (1972) that although marital adjustment and marital conventionalization were highly correlated for both men and women, the partialing out of marital conventionalization did not appreciably lower the correlations between marital adjustment and perception scores. This led O'Leary and Turkewitz (1978) to question whether social desirability responding has any serious negative consequences for the validity of self-report marital adjustment tests as Edmonds (1967) and Edmonds, Withers, and Dibastia (1972) suggest. O'Leary and Turkewitz suggest that social desirability is important only in areas where denial may have serious consequences.

Materials

Self-Disclosure Coding System. The Self-Disclosure Coding System (SDCS) (Chelune, 1976) is a nonsequential behavioral content analysis system that was designed to measure the basic parameters of self-disclosure. The SDCS variables also parallel the self-disclosure dimensions of breadth, depth, and duration as identified by Cozby (1973).

The SDCS consists of 11 categories--7 core or process variables and 4 supplemental variables. The SDCS variables parallel the self-disclosure dimensions of breadth, depth, and duration as identified by Cozby (1973). The seven core

variables include the following: (1) Amount, (2) Self-References, (3) Self-Reference Percent, (4) Intimacy, (5) Affect, (6) Rate or Duration, and (7) Self-Disclosure Flexibility. The remaining four variables further breakdown the Self-Reference category and are considered supplemental categories. These categories are: (1) Positive Self-Reference, (2) Negative Self-Reference, (3) Neutral Self-Reference, and (4) Self-Reference Weighted. With the exception of Self-Disclosure Flexibilty, all of the SDCS variables yield a process score (score based on a 30-second interval) or a summary or total score. A detailed description of the SDCS and coding procedures can be found in the Manual (Chelune, 1976).

The present study utilized four of the SDCS variables:

- (1) Amount (A)--the number of thought units (independent, non-reflexive clauses) expressed per 30-second interval.
- (2) Self-Reference Percent (SR%)--the percent of independent thought units (Amount) that describe the speaker in some way, tells something about the speaker, or refers to the speaker's affect (Self-References). Self-Reference Percent, then, is the proportion of Self-References to Amount (SR/A) that is computed for the total transcript.
- (3) Intimacy (I)--the judged depth or ego-relevance of the verbal content (rated on a 5-point Likert scale) within each 30-second interval.

(4) Duration (D)--the time, in seconds, spent talking.

Initial interrater reliability coefficients for all SDCS categories were computed from the codings of 718 intervals per rater. Product-moment correlations between the raters' scores ranged from .34 to .91. The lowest reliability coefficients were for the categories Self-Reference Neutral (.55), Affect (.34), and Intimacy (.61). The lower coefficients for Affect and Intimacy is likely related to the subjective nature of these coding variables. When each SDCS category was summed across intervals for the entire five-minute interview, interrater reliabilities ranged from .63 for Affect to .97 for Amount. To correct for possible differences in raters' codings for the various interview periods, the summary score coefficients were corrected using the Spearman-Brown procedure. Corrected coefficients ranged from .79 for Intimacy to .98 for Amount. Affect produced the lowest coefficient of .77.

The interrater reliabilities for the SDCS dimensions used in this study were computed for both interval and across-interval summary scores: .91 and .97 for Amount; .85 and .93 for Self-Reference; and .61 and .65 for Intimacy, respectively. The interrater reliability for the across-interval summary scores for Self-Reference Percent was .81. The split-half reliability technique using Spearman-Brown's correction procedure produced a coefficient of .98 for Amount, .97 for Self-Reference, .79 for Intimacy.

The odd-even method of determining internal consistency reliability was used after summing the two raters' scores for each 30-second interval. Again, correlations were high with coefficients of .83 for Self-Reference, .94 for Intimacy, and .87 for Amount. For these same variables, Spearman-Brown's corrected coefficients were .93 for Amount, .90 for Self-Reference, and .97 for Intimacy. Chelune (1976) concluded that the interrater reliability and internal consistency data indicated that the SDCS could be reliably used to assess the major dimensions of self-disclosure behavior.

The construct validity of the SDCS was established in three ways (Chelune, 1976). First, Chelune validated gender and personality differences in self-disclosure. Previous literature suggested that females disclose more than males and that sensitizers verbalize more than repressors when faced with threatening situations. Findings revealed that females were significantly higher than males on Amount, Rate, and Intimacy. No gender differences were found for Self-Reference Percent or Affect. Consistent with the literature was the finding that sensitizers verbalized more (Amount) and at a higher rate (Rate) than repressors. Although there was no significant difference in Intimacy, sensitizers were slightly more intimate than repressors.

Construct validity was further supported by discriminative function procedures. Subjects rated high-

disclosing and low-disclosing taped interviews on amount and specificity of self-disclosure. Tapes were dichotomized based on scores on the SDCS (Amount, Intimacy, Affect). Findings indicated that neither gender nor personality style (repressor/sensitizer) affected subjects' perception of self-disclosure amount or specificity. Chelune (1976) concluded that "the subjects' judgments were in accordance with the dichotomy made on the basis of SDCS scores even when the number of thought units expressed were held constant for both high and low tape conditions" (p. 57). Gilbert (1980) provided additional support for the psychometric soundness of the SDCS. He found at least equivalent or higher interrater reliability coefficients than did Chelune (1976). Product-moment correlations were .70 for Intimacy to .99 for Amount. The interrater reliabilities for Self-Reference and Self-Reference Percent were .98 and .82 respectively.

Construct validity was further supported by Gilbert's (1980) finding that untrained raters correctly coded the Intimacy dimension of self-disclosure scripts which had been constructed to reflect high, low, and medium intimacy. These scripts had been written to vary maximally on the SDCS five-point Intimacy scale while keeping other SDCS variables constant. Gilbert (1980) concluded that the SDCS effectively discriminated intimacy self-disclosure.

The SDCS has been shown to be a highly reliable and valid (Chelune, 1976; Gilbert, 1980) and has been used in a

number of research studies where self-disclosure parameters have been used as predictor variables. In all cases, interrater reliabilities have remained consistently high (Chelune, 1981; Chelune, Rosenfeld, & Waring, 1985; Chelune, Skiffington, & Williams, 1981; Hansen, 1984; Waring & Chelune, 1983).

Self-disclosure stimuli. The experimental stimuli in this study consisted of three self-disclosure topics which were selected to elicit both interpersonal and intrapersonal disclosure on highly intimate topics. The treatment stimuli were selected from Taylor and Altman's (1966a, 1966b) extensive pool of 671 stimulus statements about aspects of the self. The Taylor and Altman statements, which were developed for use in research on interpersonal exchange and self-disclosure, include 13 topical categories. All exchange stimuli were developed from existing personality and self-disclosure instruments and were scaled for intimacy by judges from two different populations.

The self-disclosure categories, "Our Marriage and Family" and "Emotions and Feelings" were chosen from among the 13 Taylor and Altman (1966b) interpersonal exchange and self-disclosure categories. These categories were selected because they represent significant areas of communication in marital relationships.

It can also be assumed that couples' marital communication develop according to the tenents of social

penetration theory. The theory posits that interpersonal relationships develop gradually over a period of time; and as the relationship develops, the greater is the exchange of personal information and the expression of affect (Taylor & Altman, 1966a; Tolstedt, 1982). Thus, one would expect that over the course of a marital relationship, that spouses reach the highest level of intimate exchange. It could be assumed, too, that spouses' position on the communication continuum may be indicative of the level of intimacy achieved in their relationship.

The treatment disclosure stimulus, "What it takes to hurt my feelings deeply" was taken from Taylor and Altman's (1966b) category, "Emotions and Feelings." This stimulus was judged by raters in the Taylor and Altman study to have a high intimacy scale value. The second treatment stimulus, "The source of strain and dissatisfaction in our marriage," was taken from the marital self-disclosure instrument, "Our Marriage Relationship," developed by Bateman (1977). He used Taylor and Altman's (1966b) battery of psychometric items as a basis for developing his scale. This item, which parallels Taylor and Altman's item, "What I would do if it seemed that my marriage was not a success," was judged by Bateman to have high intimacy value.

The practice stimulus, "Sources of satisfaction in my marriage," was written by the researcher because of its focus on the positive aspects of the relationship. It was

assumed that spouses would be more likely to communicate a wider range of thoughts and feelings about a topic that was more positive. This topic was also selected as the initial topic to balance the final topic, "Sources of strain and dissatisfaction in my marriage."

Task cards. Task cards were 3 x 5 index cards that contained the stimulus topics. There were six cards, one per spouse for each of three trials. The front of each card contained the number "1" or "2," which indicated the spousal order of initiation, and the word "husband" or "wife"; the reverse side contained the disclosure stimulus.

Procedure

Couples, who responded to the various appeal methods, were briefly interviewed to determine their eligibility for participation in the study. If the criteria were met, couples were given, during this initial contact, a description of the research study (Appendix B) and an appointment to meet with the experimenter.

Upon arrival at the experimental site, couples were greeted by the experimenter, then escorted to the experimental room, which was a small conference room in the University of Florida's Psychology Building. During this get-acquainted period, the experimenter conversed with couples about general topics and about the anxiety often associated with self-disclosing and having one's personal conversations audiotaped. Establishing rapport and helping

couples feel psychologically comfortable was the experimenter's primary goal.

To facilitate audiotape desensitization, spouses were encouraged to operate the portable audiotape recorder and to record a brief conversation on a topic of their choice. Spouses' taped conversations were then replayed to minimize any concerns they had about the quality of their audiotaped voices. In an effort to minimize observee reactive effects, which have been identified as a potential source of subject influence on experimental results (Johnson & Bolstad, 1973), the experimenter was not present in the experimental room during actual audiotaping of self-disclosure topics. After the desensitization phase, each spouse was provided an informed consent form (Appendix C) to review and sign if they still desired to participate in the study. The experimenter then provided the couple with a verbal set of standardized instructions and procedures (Appendix D). Spouses were encouraged to ask questions at anytime before the taping began.

Couples participated in three trials--a 15-minute practice trial and two 15-minute treatment trials. Each trial was identical with the exception of the disclosure stimuli, which varied for each of the three trials. Spouses were not informed that Trial 1 was a practice trial.

Although each spouse was allowed five minutes per trial to disclose on a topic, spouses were advised that they

could disclose for as long as they wished but the duration of their individual disclosures could not exceed five minutes. This flexibility in duration was intended to facilitate greater ease during self-disclosure by allowing spouses to assimilate their own natural communication behaviors. Additionally, a "floor effect" was controlled by not requiring that spouses disclose for a minimum duration of time.

At the initiation of each trial, each spouse was presented a 3 x 5 index card indicating the order of initiation. The front of each card contained one of the following identifiers from each group: (1) the number 1 or 2, (2) the word initiator or listener, and (3) the word husband or wife. The reverse side contained the disclosure stimulus, which was identical for both spouses. A counterbalanced design for initiation was used to control for initiation effects.

Spouse 1, who was referred to as "initiator" was instructed to begin the first five-minute disclosure phase immediately after starting the timer. They were instructed to wait until the experimenter left the room. Spouse 2, who will be referred to as "listener," was instructed not to engage in the discussion but to simply listen to his or her partner's disclosure. The sound of the buzzer indicated the end of the disclosure phase for Spouse 1. Spouse 2 then reset the timer for the next five-minute

disclosure phase. At the termination of this five-minute period, Spouse 2 reset the timer for the final five-minute "free interaction" phase. Either spouse could initiate this phase which focused on spouses' thoughts and feelings about their own and/or their spouse's previous disclosures. Couples repeated this procedure for each of the three trials.

At the conclusion of the audiotaping session, each spouse was asked to complete the questionnarie packet which consisted of the following: Personal Data Questionnaire, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Marital Conventionalization Scale. Couples completed each measure in the order presented above. Spouses were debriefed and provided with details regarding the free seminar addressing communication issues in the marital relationships of black couples. Each couple was paid \$10.00 for their participation in the study.

Selection and Training of Coders

Two black post-baccalaurette students (a male and a female), who had undergraduate degrees in psychology, were trained to code disclosure transcripts. Coders rated each spouse's taped disclosures using three of the SDCS coding categories: Amount, Intimacy, and Self-Reference. The fourth SDCS category, Duration, was used for summarizing the process variables. All self-disclosure dimensions were scored using verbatim transcripts of the couple's

audiotaped self-disclosures. Coders were trained to code these transcripts according to the procedures outlined in the SDCS Coding Manual (Chelune, 1976; G. J. Chelune, personal communication, 1986). The training manual was supplemented by practice transcripts, discussions, and feedback concerning coder accuracy.

Prior to the first training session, coders were advised to have memorized all coding components. According to Gottman (1979), this minimized the tendency of coders to remember some coding categories better than others or to over-utilize a favorite category. A disclaimer was also made at the beginning of training recognizing the frustration that coders were likely to experience because of the complex discriminations and tedious nature of the coding task (Gottman, 1979).

Training coders to use the SDCS required approximately 50 hours for the researcher and considerably more time for the coders. This was likely due to the cultural differences in communication styles of blacks and whites. For example, Chelune (1976) used standard English grammar and composition rules as the basis for determining whether a statement met the criteria as an independent "thought unit" (Amount). Because some blacks in this study used a black dialect, which does not conform to the standard rules of English, the Amount category was especially difficult to code. The other SDCS categories, however, were less influenced by culture.

During each training session, feedback was given to coders regarding their accuracy. Once coders felt confident of their coding skills, several reliability checks, using similar stimulus material, were given. Clarification of coding errors was provided during retraining but not during reliability checks when reliabilities were still being established.

Training was considered complete when an 85% agreement and accuracy standard had been obtained between coders and between each coder and the trainer/researcher. A set of previously coded criterion protocols were used to establish the reliability between the trainer/researcher and the coders. Criterion was reached when an 85% agreement was obtained on three consecutive training transcripts for each of the SDCS coding categories (Amount, Self-Reference, Intimacy). To avoid potential expectancy bias, coders were not advised of this training criterion.

Herbert and Attridge (1975) consider an 85% agreement standard adequate for behavioral observations. This standard is also consistent with previous research using fairly complex coding systems. When coding sequential interactions, Gottman (1979) used 70% agreement as a criterion before coders worked with actual data but stated that coders' level of agreement for his research was considerably higher than this minimum. Morton (1976) used a unit-by-unit standard of a 92% effective percentage agreement when training raters to code self-disclosure.

Johnson and Bolstad (1973) considered an overall percentage agreement of 80% to 85% as a realistic upper limit in complex coding systems. Thus, the 85% agreement standard established for this study was considered adequate.

Researchers have expressed some concern about the ability of coders to maintain accuracy over time (Campbell & Stanley, 1966; Hollenbeck, 1978). They warned that "observer drift," a potential source of reliability contamination, was likely to decrease the accuracy of coders at subsequent times during the course of observation. According to Hollenbeck (1978), and Johnson and Bolstad (1973), high levels of observer/coder agreement can be maintained through covert assessment of coders' accuracy. They disagreed, however, on the frequency of observation. Hollenbeck supported continuous monitoring under covert assessment conditions while Johnson and Bolstad advocated random assessment where raters were aware of random checks but did not know when they would occur. This study utilized the latter method which is discussed below.

To counter the problem of observer drift, coders were advised that random accuracy checks would be conducted to ascertain any decrease in the accuracy of their codings. Three such checks were made by anonymously assigning the same transcripts to both coders. Results of the accuracy check revealed that the reliability coefficients were similar to those established during training. Coefficients

ranged from .83 for Self-Reference to .98 for Amount. Therefore, additional training was not necessary although accuracy feedback and some clarifications of the coding system was provided. Both coders were present during these discussions.

Interrater reliability. To check interrater reliability, a random subsample of the data from 13 (27%) of the 48 couples was used. Once reliabilities had been obtained, a random process was used to determine which coder's couple scores would be reentered into the sample for further analyses. In past observational research, a 10% subsample was used to compute interrater reliabilities (Adamson & Bakeman, 1985). Others have considered a 25% subsample adequate (Farrar, 1988, personal communication).

Reliability coefficients were computed for 1,545 SDCS speech segments. Main analyses were based on data obtained from 5,676 speech segments. Husbands' and wives' data were combined across the two intimacy level topics resulting in a single reliability coefficient for each self-disclosure dimension. Using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient, the reliability for Amount was .95. Percent agreement was used to compute the reliability coefficients for Self-Reference and Intimacy which was .81 and .96 respectively. Percent agreement was used over the Pearson correlation to calculate the reliability for Intimacy. This measurement was used because of the difficulty in obtaining reliability for this highly subjective rating

scale. This problem was also recognized by Chelune (1976) and Gilbert (1980) who also found that Intimacy characteristically produced somewhat lower reliability coefficients as compared to other self-disclosure dimensions. Because of the scales' subjectivity, agreement between coders was determined to be ratings that were no more than one point apart on the five-point Likert scale. Interrater reliability for Self-Reference Percent was not calculated since it is the proportion of Self-References to Amounts, and thus not coded.

There has been some disagreement about the use of percentage agreement as an adequate measure of reliability (Hollenbeck, 1978). Although it has been frequently used as a measure of reliability, Hollenbeck states that its use has been oversimplified. Researchers do agree, however, that any measure of observer/coder reliability must encompass both accuracy and stability of measurement scores (Hollenbeck, 1978; Johnson & Bolstad, 1973; Kerlinger, 1964). Herbert and Attridge (1975) stated that "observer agreement does not, by itself, assess observer accuracy unless it is compared with some previously established standard. Similarly, observer agreement does not assess stability unless it is measured over repeated trials" (p. 81). This criterion was met in this study by comparing observers' codings of training transcripts with previously established coding of the same transcripts by the trainer/researcher (criterion). Once accuracy agreement

was reached between each coder and the criterion protocols established by the trainer/researcher, accuracy agreement was then assessed between coders. Because the trainer/experimenter served as the consensus during the initial training, the inflation effect of percentage agreement was minimized.

CHAPTER IV RESULTS

Because research on the marital adjustment of Black couples is still in its infancy and, thus, in the exploratory stage, correlation analyses and regression analyses have been the primary methods for determining the empirical relationship between marital adjustment and self-disclosure.

As a preliminary analysis, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to determine the nature of the relationships among the following variables: (1) marital adjustment, (2) the self-disclosure variables of Amount, Self-Reference Percent, Intimacy, and Duration, (3) marital conventionalization, and (4) the demographic variables of income, education, age, and years married. Although MCS and the demographic variables are being treated as secondary variables in this study, they were included because of their possible influence on the relationship between marital adjustment and self-disclosure. Separate scores for husbands and wives were entered into the correlation analyses. The results will be discussed in Hypotheses 1 and 2.

Although several of the variables had a significant relationship with marital adjustment, marital

conventionalization (MCS)--an index of social desirability responding--produced the strongest significant relationship. The results, shown in Table 4.1, revealed that MCS was significantly related to the dependent variable, marital adjustment of both husbands, $r = .70$, $p < .0001$, and wives, $r = .61$, $p < .0001$. Marital conventionalization was also found to be significantly related to some of the self-disclosure behaviors although these correlations were substantially lower. For husbands, MCS was related to husbands' Amount, $r = -.27$, $p < .06$, and husbands' Duration, $r = -.28$, $p < .06$. For wives, MCS was related to wives' Self-Reference Percent, $r = .33$, $p < .02$. Thus, MCS was considered a significant variable for this sample. The influence of MCS on spouses' reported marital adjustment was further explored as a post-hoc analysis. The results appear at the end of this chapter.

When MCS is taken as a measure of social desirability, its strong effect suggests that social desirability possibly played a role in shaping spouses' responses to other response variables. Therefore, to consider the influence of MCS and to be conservative in interpretation of the results, MCS was also examined as a predictor variable in all hypothesis tests, with the exception of Hypothesis 3 and 4 which investigated mean differences. Additionally, partial correlations were used to control the effect of MCS and the demographic variables so that the

Table 4.1
Correlations of Marital Adjustment and Marital Conventionalization with Self-Disclosure and Demographic Variables

Variables	Marital Adjustment		Marital Conventionalization	
	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
Amount H ^a	-.12	.002	-.27*	-.13
Amount W ^b	-.09	-.07	-.13	-.20
Self-Reference % H	.12	.24	-.05	-.04
Self-Reference % W	.33**	.52****	.27	.33**
Intimacy H	-.10	-.12	-.19	-.18
Intimacy W	-.06	.02	.02	-.16
Duration H	-.22	-.18	-.28*	-.18
Duration W	.01	-.10	-.02	-.23
Income H	-.34**	-.24	-.30**	-.05
Income W	-.12	-.26	-.08	-.03
Education H	-.34**	-.12	-.46****	-.18
Education W	.06	.16	-.02	-.05
Age H	.03	-.08	.08	.18
Age W	.01	-.12	.05	.19
Years Married	-.13	-.06	-.15	-.15
MCS H ^c	.70****	.42***		
MCS W	.22	.61****		

Note. n=48 for husbands; n=47 for wives.

^aHusbands.

*p<.06.

****p<.001.

^bWives.

**p<.05.

^cMarital Conventionalization.

***p<.01.

relationship between marital adjustment and self-disclosure could be more reliably assessed.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 states that there is no relationship between husbands' marital adjustment and (1) their own self-disclosure behavior, nor (2) their wives' self-disclosure behavior. To begin the test of Hypothesis 1, Pearson product-moment correlations were computed for husbands' marital adjustment scores and (1) both spouses' self-disclosure output scores on the variables, Amount, Self-Reference Percent, Intimacy, and Duration; (2) both spouses' demographic variables of income, education, and age; and (3) years married. The results, presented in Table 4.1, show a significant positive zero-order correlation between husbands' marital adjustment and wives' Self-Reference Percent, $r = .33$, $p < .02$. No self-disclosure behaviors for husbands were related to husbands' marital adjustment scores. However, two demographic variables were significantly correlated with husbands' marital adjustment: husbands' education, $r = -.34$, $p < .02$; and husbands' income, $r = -.34$, $p < .02$.

In addition to Pearson product-moment correlations, Hypothesis 1 was also tested using multiple regression and stepwise multiple regression analyses. The analyses sought to determine (1) if self-disclosure behaviors (Amount,

Intimacy, Self-Reference Percent, Duration) of husbands and wives significantly predict marital adjustment of husbands and (2) if the predictive power of these variables is influenced by both spouses' income, education, age, and years married. Thus, the independent variables included both spouses' self-disclosure behaviors and demographic variables. Because MCS was found to be strongly associated with marital adjustment in this sample, it was also examined as a predictor. However, partners' MCS scores were not included as a predictor of the other partners' marital adjustment. The dependent criterion variable was husbands' marital adjustment.

The multiple regression analysis revealed a significant regression model for husbands' marital adjustment, $F(16, 29) = 2.86$, $p < .007$ (Table 4.2). The multiple R^2 was .61; the adjusted R^2 was .40. The fact that the adjusted R^2 was significantly lower than R^2 , is likely due to the ratio of the relatively large number of predictor variables to subjects (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973). The large R^2 , then, likely represents an overestimation of the model variance. This, along with the small betas, suggested the need for a smaller regression model.

An examination of the independent predictors revealed that only 1 of the 16 variables yielded significant regression coefficients. As expected, husbands' MCS was statistically significant and accounted for most of the

Table 4.2
Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Husbands' Marital Adjustment from Both Spouses' Self-Disclosure Behaviors and Other Predictor Variables

Source	SS	MS	df	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F
Model	7510.23	469.39	16	.61	.40	2.86*
Error	4758.14	164.07	29			
Predictor Variables		Regression Coefficients				
Amount H ^a			.12	.89	.38	
Amount W ^b			-.24	-1.83	.08	
Self-Reference % H			.12	.51	.61	
Self-Reference % W			.20	.98	.34	
Intimacy H			.31	.85	.40	
Intimacy W			.11	.24	.81	
Duration H			-.08	-1.92	.07	
Duration W			.06	1.08	.29	
Income H			-.67	-.58	.57	
Income W			-1.42	-.81	.43	
Education H			-.82	-.62	.54	
Education W			1.35	.83	.42	
Age H			.03	.06	.96	
Age W			-.05	-.05	.96	
Years Married			-.04	-.09	.93	
Marital Conventionalization H			.27	2.73	.01	

^aHusbands.^bWives.

*p<.007.

model variance, $t(29) = 2.73$, $p < .01$. Only marginal significance was obtained for two other self-disclosure variables: the duration of time that husbands spent talking, $t(29) = -1.92$, $p < .07$, and the amount of independent thought units shared by wives, $t(29) = -1.83$, $p < .08$. This suggested that these aspects of self-disclosure may be important in husbands' perception of what constitutes their own adjustment in their marriage. The fact that no other self-disclosure or demographic variables even remotely approached statistical significance led to the conclusion that a much smaller regression model was indicated.

The stepwise multiple regression procedure was used to determine if a reduced model would approach the maximum R^2 with a minimum number of predictor variables. With the exploratory stepwise procedure, only those variables with the most discriminatory power of the model is retained, but only after meeting a minimum significance criterion. In this analysis, the minimum F statistic required for a predictor to enter the model was $p < .15$. Results indicated that the two-variable model, yielding an R^2 of .51, $F(2, 43) = 22.15$, $p < .0001$, produced the "best" predictive model when the significance criterion was set at $p < .15$ (Table 4.3). As suggested by the multiple regression, husbands' MCS score accounted for 47% of the

variance in the criterion while husbands' Self-Reference Percent accounted for only 4%. Thus, the variance in husbands' marital adjustment essentially was accounted for by the single variable model, indicating a tendency for husbands to respond positively to social desirability.

Table 4.3

Best Fit Stepwise Regression Model for Predicting Husbands' Marital Adjustment from Both Spouses' Self-Disclosure Behaviors and Demographic Variables

	R ²	df	F	
Regression Equation	.51	2/43	22.15*	
Predictor Variables Entered	B-value	Partial R ²	Model R ²	F
Marital Conventionalization H*	.42	.47	.47	43.03**
Self-Reference % H	.28	.03	.51	2.91*

Note. The significant F values refer to the beta coefficients. A significance level of .15 was used as the cut-off criterion for entry into the models. No variables were removed from the model because of the significance criterion.

*Husbands.

*p<.10.

**p<.0001.

The pervasive influence of MCS indicated that further analyses were needed to isolate the unique contribution each self-disclosure variable made on husbands' marital

adjustment scores. Thus, a partial correlation analysis was computed to isolate the effects of each independent variable on the criterion, marital adjustment. This was done by partialing out the common variance associated with the dependent variable and other "contaminating" independent variables so that the true relationship between the dependent variable and independent variable could be observed. This process is especially important when there is evidence that any of the independent variables are significantly correlated with each other, as was the case in this study (Table 4.4). (Table 4.1, which was reported earlier, contains significant correlations between MCS and the independent variables.) If the magnitude of the correlation between marital adjustment and the variable being examined drops drastically, after the "contaminant" (i.e., MCS) has been partialled from both variables, this is an indication that the relationship between these variables was not a pure one, but one inflated by the "contaminant."

With these analytical procedures in mind, partial correlations were computed for husbands. The Type II partial correlation analyses for husbands produced negligible results. The one consistent finding, however, was that MCS remained a significant predictor even after partialing out the variance it shared with marital adjustment and the other independent variables, $\beta = .21$, $p < .01$ (Table 4.5). It is interesting to note, however,

Table 4.4Pearson Product-Moment Correlations between Spouses' Self-Disclosure and Demographic Variables

Variables	Amount	<u>Self-Disclosure</u>			Duration
		Self-Reference %	Intimacy		
Husbands (n=48)					
Income H ^a	-.005	-.10	.0009	.03	
Income W ^b	-.21	-.28*	-.17	-.31**	
Education H	.20	.07	.23	.26	
Education W	-.08	.21	-.11	-.17	
Age H	-.15	.009	.02	-.05	
Age W	-.19	.07	.03	-.04	
Years Married	.03	.21	.13	.06	
Wives (n=47)					
Income H	.05	-.16	.05	.08	
Income W	-.29**	-.15	-.30	-.30**	
Education H	.004	-.008	-.03	.07	
Education W	-.02	.14	-.15	-.14	
Age H	-.20	.04	-.10	-.04	
Age W	-.22	.04	-.08	-.04	
Years Married	.006	-.12	.04	.05	

^aHusbands.^bWives.

*p<.06.

**p<.05.

Table 4.5

Comparison of Zero-Order and Partial Correlations between Husbands' Marital Adjustment Scores and Self-Disclosure and Demographic Variables

Variables	r	r ²	pr	pr ²
Amount H ^a	-.12	.01	.03	.00
Amount W ^b	-.09	.01	.10	.01
Self-Reference % H	.12	.01	.01	.00
Self-Reference % W	.33***	.11	.03	.00
Intimacy H	-.10	.01	.02	.00
Intimacy W	-.06	.00	.00	.00
Duration H	-.22	.05	.11*	.01
Duration W	-.01	.00	.04	.00
Income H	-.34**	.12	.01	.00
Income W	-.12	.01	.02	.00
Education H	-.34**	.14	.01	.00
Education W	-.06	.00	.02	.00
Age H	.03	.00	.00	.00
Age W	.01	.00	.00	.00
Years Married	-.13	.02	.00	.00
Marital Conventionalization H	.70****	.49	.21***	.04

Note. Type II partial correlations were generated by regression analyses. Partial correlation coefficients indicate the strength of the relationship between the DV and a given IV after the influence of all other variables in the model have been removed.

^aHusbands.

*p<.07.

***p<.01.

^bWives.

**p<.02.

****p<.0001.

that the unique variance accounted for by MCS significantly decreased to 4.2% of the remaining variance in husbands' marital adjustment scores. This can be compared to the stepwise multiple regression and the zero-order correlation where MCS accounted for 47% and 49%, respectively, of the variance in husbands' marital adjustment scores. This indicates that the relationship between husbands' marital adjustment and MCS does not, in general, appear to be as significant for all husbands as earlier findings suggested. However, because of the strong relationship between MCS and husbands' income, education, Duration, and Amount, one would expect that the association between husbands' marital adjustment and MCS is likely influenced by income and/or education. This point is illustrated in the following comparisons of partial and zero-order correlations.

A comparison of the partial correlations and the zero-order correlations revealed inconsistent results. Among the zero-order correlations, four variables were significantly related to husbands' marital adjustment: (1) wives' Self-Reference Percent, $r = .33$, $p < .02$; (2) husbands' income, $r = -.34$, $p < .02$; (3) husbands' education $r = -.34$, $p < .02$; and (4) husbands' MCS, $r = .70$, $p < .0001$. These relationships, however, disappeared when the linear associations with other independent variables were partialled from both the marital adjustment scores and the independent variable being

examined. The variance contributed by these variables dropped from 11% to .09% for wives' Self-Reference Percent; from 12% to .01% for husbands' income; and from 14% to .02% for husbands' education. These results are also represented in Table 4.5. The reason for the changes in the amount of variance contributed by these variables is that the correlation between marital adjustment and these variables is redundant with the correlation between husbands' marital adjustment and other independent variables. Thus, the unique variance contributed by these variables is reduced.

Another interesting observation was that the relationship between husbands' marital adjustment and husbands' Duration, $\rho_r = .11$, $p < .07$, increased in significance, although marginally, when partial correlation procedures were applied to the data. With zero-order correlations, the relationship between husbands' marital adjustment and Duration did not approach statistical significance, $r = -.22$, $p < .13$. However, the amount of variance contributed by husbands' Duration decreased from 4% to 1%.

Based on the preceding analyses, only a few of the predictors showed a significant relationship with husbands' marital adjustment. Of these, only Duration and MCS appeared to be consistently important for husbands' marital adjustment, although MCS was a much stronger predictor.

Wives' Amount, which emerged as a significant factor in the partial correlations, also appeared to be important for husbands' adjustment. The most consistent self-disclosure behavior, however, was the duration of time that husbands spent talking to their wives, which appeared to be negatively related to their marital adjustment. Thus, a fairly clear pattern of those factors associated with husbands' marital adjustment has emerged. Again, further research is needed to determine the extent of this relationship.

Finally, scatter plots were generated to determine whether the characteristically low associations between husbands' marital adjustment and self-disclosure were related to a curvilinear function. Thus, plots were generated to determine the adequacy of the linear regression model and of the correlations. As explained by Cohen and Cohen (1983), a curvilinear relationship, if not provided for in a regression model, would result in an increase in the variance of the residual, thus producing a substantially lower R^2 .

Plots for husbands' marital adjustment were generated twice for each spouses' self-disclosure behavior. The first plot contained the influence of MCS on both the DV and IV. In neither of the plots was there evidence of a curvilinear pattern between husbands' marital adjustment and self-disclosure. However, slight linear trends were

detected in two of the plots that included the MCS influence: husbands' Duration, which was negative; and wives' Self-Reference Percent, which was positive. Although there was less variability in scores, these relationships became obscured once MCS was partialled out (Figures 4.1 - 4.4).

Results consistently indicated that husbands' Duration was negatively related to husbands' report of their marital adjustment. Inconsistent findings also suggested that wives' Self-Reference Percent may be positively related to husbands' marital adjustment. However, Amount nor Intimacy produced any significant results. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no relationship between wives' marital adjustment and (1) their own self-disclosure behavior, nor (2) their husbands' self-disclosure behavior. The relationship between wives' marital adjustment and self-disclosure was first tested by computing Pearson product-moment correlations. Results showed a significant positive zero-order correlation between wives' reported marital adjustment and wives' Self-Reference Percent, $r = .52$, $p < .0002$ (Table 4.1). Neither husbands' nor wives' self-disclosure Intimacy, Amount, or Duration was related to wives' marital adjustment. In contrast to the findings in husbands' marital adjustment

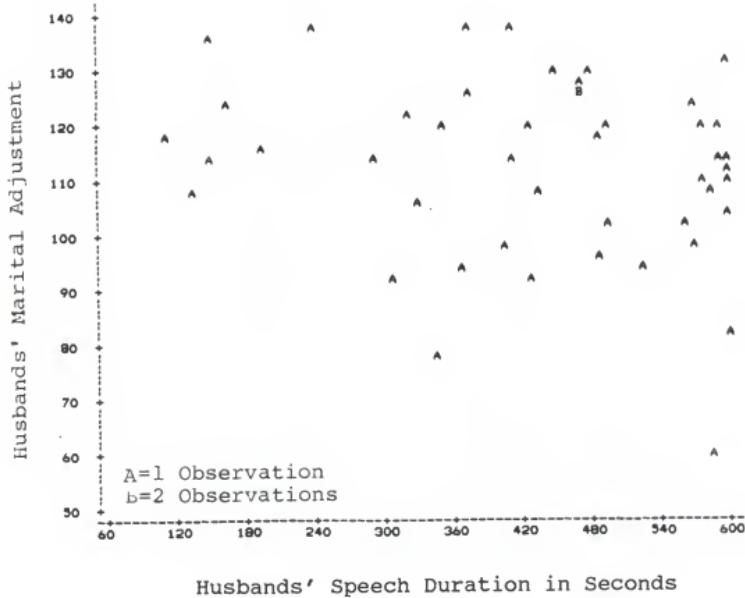


Figure 4.1 Relationship between Husbands' Marital Adjustment and Husbands' Speech Duration

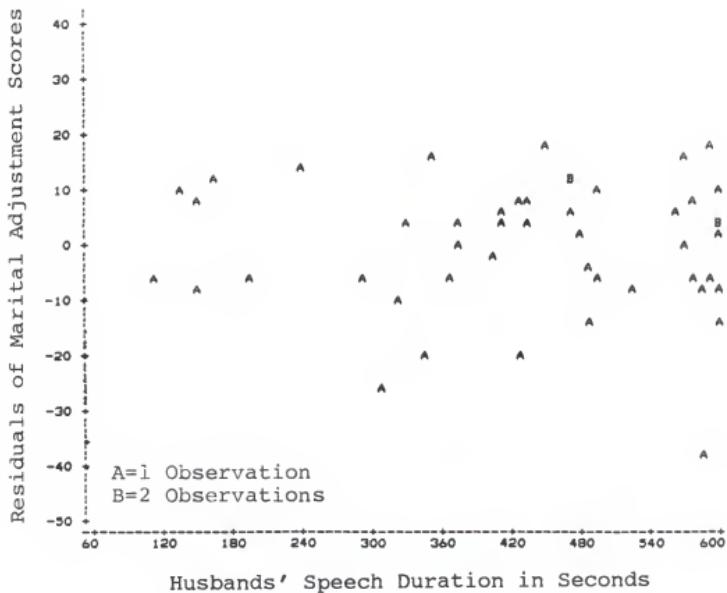


Figure 4.2 Relationship between Husbands' Marital Adjustment and Husbands' Speech Duration, while Adjusting for Marital Conventionalization

Note. Residuals refer to the differences between the observed score (with MCS) and the predicted score (without MCS).

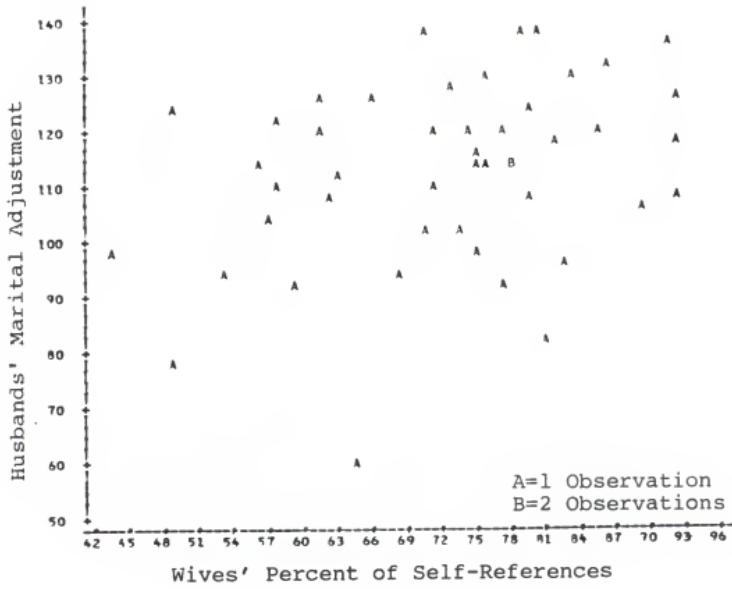


Figure 4.3 Relationship between Husbands' Marital Adjustment and Wives' Percent of Self-References

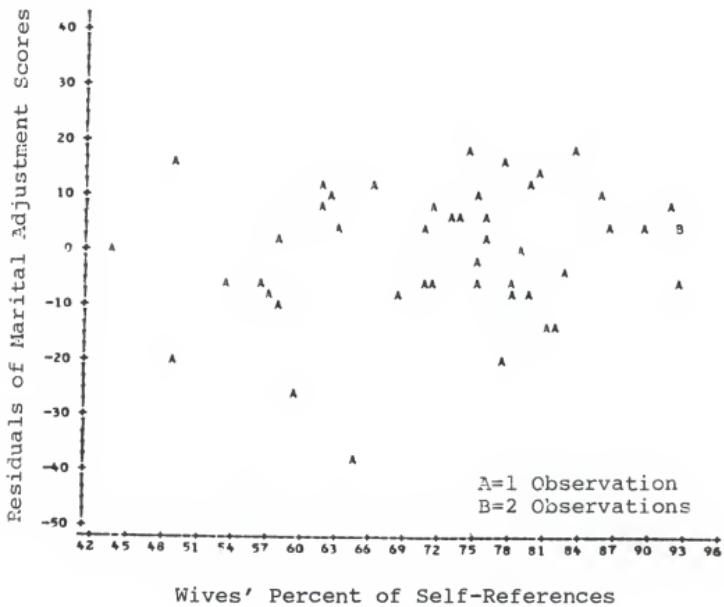


Figure 4.4 Relationship between husbands' Marital Adjustment and Wives' Percent of Self-References, while Adjusting for Marital Conventionalization

Note. Residuals refer to the difference between the observed score (with MCS) and the predicted score (without MCS). One observation had missing values.

data (where husbands' income and education were negatively related to their marital adjustment), neither husbands' nor wives' income, education, or years married was related to wives' marital adjustment.

A separate multiple regression analysis was computed for wives using marital adjustment as the criterion and the same self-disclosure dimensions and demographic variables, noted in Hypothesis 1, as predictor variables. The multiple regression equation for the prediction of wives' marital adjustment was significant, $F(16, 29) = 5.63$, $p < .0001$, yielding an R^2 of .76 and an adjusted R^2 of .62. Six of the 16 predictors originally entered into the model produced significant regression coefficients. As shown in Table 4.6, significant predictors included the following: husbands' Duration, $t(29) = -2.08$, $p < .05$; wives' Amount, $t(29) = -3.29$, $p < .003$; wives' Self-Reference Percent, $t(29) = 2.29$, $p < .03$; wives' income, $t(29) = -2.04$, $p < .05$; wives' education, $t(29) = 2.60$, $p < .01$; and wives' marital conventionalization, $t(29) = 4.60$, $p < .0001$.

These findings were followed up with a stepwise multiple regression analysis. Results, shown in Table 4.7, indicated that a four-variable model produced the "best" predictors of wives' marital adjustment, accounting for 56% of the variance, $F(4, 41) = 13.11$, $p < .0001$. Partial R^2 analyses indicated that wives' marital conventionalization, like that of husbands, accounted for the largest share of

Table 4.6

Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting
Wives' Marital Adjustment from Both Spouses' Self-
Disclosure Behaviors and Other Predictor Variables

Source	SS	MS	df	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F
Model	6356.73	397.30	16	.76	.62	5.627*
Error	2047.70	70.61	29			
Predictor Variables		Regression Coefficients		t	p-value	
Amount H ^a			.09	.99		.33
Amount W ^b			-.26	-3.29		.003
Self-Reference % H			.05	.32		.75
Self-Reference % W			.31	2.29		.03
Intimacy H			.12	.51		.61
Intimacy W			.58	1.86		.07
Duration H			-.05	-2.08		.05
Duration W			.007	.19		.85
Income H			.03	.04		.97
Income W			-2.28	-2.04		.05
Education H			-.55	-.68		.50
Education W			2.70	2.60		.01
Age H			.27	.70		.49
Age W			-.99	-1.45		.16
Years Married			.36	1.25		.22
Marital Conventionalization W		.33		4.60		.0001

^aWives.^bHusbands.

*p<.0001.

Table 4.7

Best Fit Stepwise Regression Model for Predicting Wives' Marital Adjustment from Both Spouses' Self-Disclosure Behaviors and Demographic Variables

	R ²	df	F	
Regression Equation	.56	4/41	13.11****	
Predictor Variables Entered	B-value	Partial R ²	Model R ²	F
Marital Conventionalization W ^a	.38	.36	.36	24.86****
Self-Reference % W	.33	.12	.48	6.63***
Age W	-.42	.05	.53	5.71**
Self-Reference % H ^b	.25	.04	.56	3.31*

Note. The significant F values refer to the beta coefficients. A significance level of .15 was used as the cut-off criterion for entry into the models. No variables were removed from the model because of the significance criterion.

^aWives.

^bHusbands.

*p<.08.

**p<.02.

***p<.01.

****p<.0001.

the variance (35.95%). The remaining three variables collectively accounted for 20.17% of the variance in wives' marital adjustment. These predictor variables included wives' Self-Reference Percent, husbands' Self-Reference Percent, and wives' age which produced partial R² coefficients of .12, .04, and .05 respectively.

The unexpected finding that wives' age was related to wives' marital adjustment should be viewed conservatively, particularly since there was no indication in previous analyses to suggest a relationship with wives' marital adjustment. As explained by Cohen and Cohen (1983), the stepwise regression analysis may be misleading in that a variable is simply added to the model because it contributes a significant amount of variance that has not already been explained by those variables already in the model. They further added that "When competing IVs are substantially correlated with each other, ... the losers in the competition may not make a sufficiently large unique contribution to be entered at any subsequent step before the problem is terminated by nonsignificance" (p. 124).

As in Hypothesis 1, partial correlation analyses were computed for wives' marital adjustment and self-disclosure behavior scores. The results, presented in Table 4.8, revealed several significant associations between wives' marital adjustment scores and self-disclosure behavior. Among the self-disclosure behaviors, wives' Self-Reference Percent produced the only significant zero-order correlation with wives' marital adjustment, $r = .52$, $p < .0002$. This relationship remained significant with the partial correlation, $pr = .15$, $p < .03$, which supported its potency as a predictor of wives' marital adjustment.

Table 4.8

Comparison of Zero-Order and Partial Correlations between
Wives' Marital Adjustment Scores and Self-Disclosure and
Demographic Variables

Variables	r	r ²	pr	pr ²
Amount H ^a	.00	.00	.03	.00
Amount W ^b	-.07	.00	.27**	.07
Self-Reference % H	.24	.06	.00	.00
Self-Reference % W	.52***	.27	.15*	.02
Intimacy H	-.12	.01	.01	.00
Intimacy W	.02	.00	.11	.01
Duration H	-.18	.03	.13*	.02
Duration W	-.10	.01	.00	.00
Income H	-.24	.06	.00	.00
Income W	-.26	.07	.13*	.02
Education H	-.12	.01	.02	.00
Education W	.16	.03	.19**	.04
Age H	-.08	.00	.02	.00
Age W	-.12	.01	.07	.00
Years Married	-.06	.00	.05	.00
Marital Conventionalization W	.61***	.37	.41***	.18

Note. Type II partial correlations were generated by regression analyses. Partial correlations coefficients indicate the strength of the relationship between the DV and a given IV after the influence of all other variables in the model have been removed.

^aHusbands. *p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

^bWives.

Other self-disclosure behaviors became significant when partial correlation analyses were applied to the data: wives Amount, $pr = .27$, $p < .0003$; and husbands' Duration, $pr = .13$, $p < .05$. As expected, wives' MCS remained significant in both correlation analyses: $r = .61$, $p < .0001$ and $pr = .42$, $p < .0001$. Partial correlations also produced significant demographic associations, although none of these demographic variables were significant with zero-order correlations: wives' education, $pr = .19$, $p < .02$; and wives' income, $pr = .13$, $p < .05$. These changes in significance indicated that other nonpartialled variables were suppressing the effect of the variables that appeared significant with partial correlations.

A comparison of the variances contributed by these variables, using both correlation procedures, revealed that wives' Self-Reference Percent contributed 27% of the variance when a zero-order correlation analysis was applied versus 2% for a partial correlation. The reduction in the variance contributed by wives' Self-Reference Percent was likely related to the variance it shared with MCS and wives' Amount. Note the emergence of wives' Amount as a significant partial correlation which was not significant in the zero-order correlation (Table 4.8). Additionally, the definition of Self-Reference Percent--the proportion of self-references to amount of thought units--further support

the idea that the variance between these two variables was shared.

Other self-disclosure variables that yielded significant partial correlations included the amount of independent thoughts shared by wives, which contributed 7% to the variance in wives' marital adjustment, and husbands' speech duration, which contributed 2% of the variance. Among the demographic variables, wives' education contributed the most variance (4%) in wives' marital adjustment, followed by wives' income (2%). The influence of wives' MCS remained high, contributing 37% of the variance in wives' marital adjustment when using a zero-order correlation analysis as compared to 18% of the variance when using a partial correlation procedure.

Although the zero-order and partial correlation analyses produced somewhat different results, the difference is related to the treatment of the variances in both the DV and IVs. The zero-order correlation assessed the relationship between wives' marital adjustment and each IV, with the help of associated IVs; the partial correlation determined the unique relationship between wives' marital adjustment and each IV, without the assistance from other IVs. Thus, those IVs that consistently demonstrated a relationship with the dependent variable, marital adjustment, should be given considerable import. Such was the case with wives' Self-Reference

Percent and wives' MCS, which were significant in the zero-order and partial correlations, multiple regression, and stepwise regression procedures. Additionally, wives' income and education should also be considered as important predictors of wives' marital adjustment. Although neither wives' income nor education was prominent in the stepwise procedures, both were significant in the multiple regression and partial correlations. Indications are that as wives' income increases, their marital adjustment decreases; as their education increases, so does their report of marital satisfaction.

As was done in Hypothesis 1, scatter plots were generated, each plotting marital adjustment as a function of husbands' and wives' self-disclosure behavior. While there was no discernible pattern of responses between Amount, Intimacy, and Duration, and wives' marital adjustment scores, the plot for wives' Self-Reference Percent suggested a moderately linear relationship between these two latter variables (Figure 4.5). This relationship persisted even when the influence of MCS was partialled from the whole variance (Figure 4.6). There was no evidence of a curvilinear relationship between wives' marital adjustment and self-disclosure.

Hypothesis 3 and 4

Hypothesis 3 states that there is no difference in husbands' and wives' marital adjustment when income,

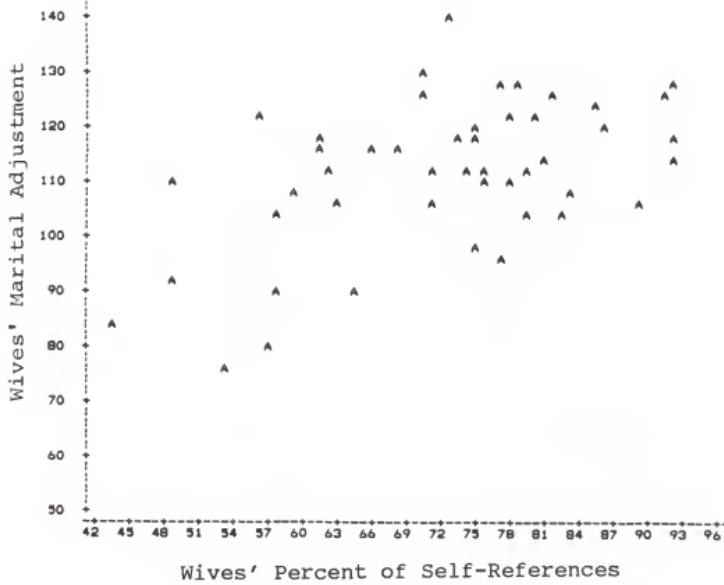


Figure 4.5 Relationship between Wives' Marital Adjustment and Wives' Percent of Self-References

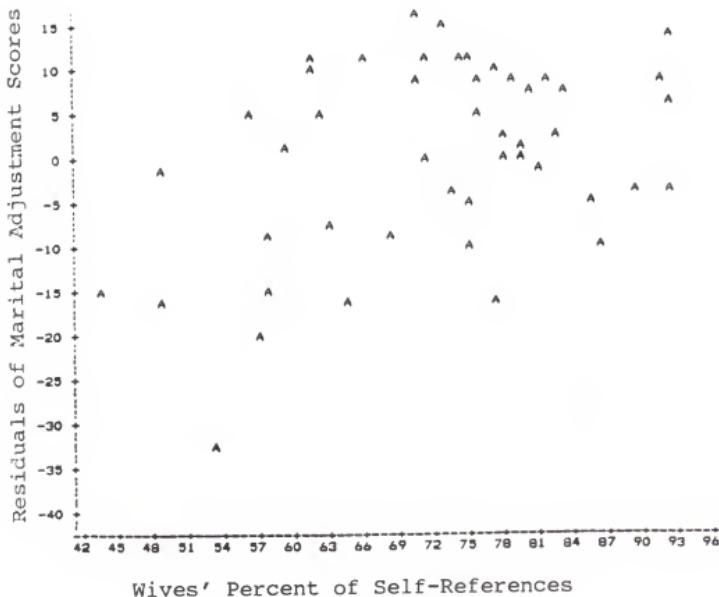


Figure 4.6 Relationship between Wives' Marital Adjustment and Wives' Percent of Self-References, while Adjusting for Marital Conventionalization

Note. Residuals refer to the difference between the observed score (with MCS) and the predicted score (without MCS). One observation had missing values.

education, and years married are considered. This hypothesis was designed to test if there was a difference in the marital adjustment of husbands and wives (within-subjects factor) when both of their demographic characteristics (between-subjects factors) are considered. Thus, a repeated measures design was employed. Similarly, Hypothesis 4 states that there is no difference in husbands' and wives' self-disclosure behavior (Amount, Self-Reference Percent, Intimacy, Duration) when income of husbands and wives, education of husbands and wives, and years married are considered. Results for hypothesis 3 and 4 will be presented together because the two within-subject variables and the demographic between-subject variables were analyzed in the same model.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 were tested, using a repeated measures MANOVA. A repeated-measures design was employed to take into account the correlation between husbands' and wives' scores for each dependent variable in the model. The repeated-measures procedure also allowed tests of the null hypotheses regarding the within-subject factors as well as tests of the interactions of within-subjects factors with between-subjects factors.

The repeated-measures MANOVA was used to determine if husbands' and wives' income, education, and years of marriage were significantly associated with the dependent variables which included (1) marital adjustment and (2)

self-disclosure behavior (Amount, Self-Reference Percent, Intimacy, and Duration). Thus, ten dependent variables were entered into the repeated-measures MANOVA, five for both husbands and wives, respectively. Main effects for the within-subject factors, to test husband and wife differences, were examined. Interaction effects of the within-subject and between-subject factors, to test for the consistency of any husband and wife differences with regard to the demographic variables, were also examined. The Wilks' lambda criterion and an alpha level of $p < .05$ were used in all multivariate analyses. Scheffe's post-hoc comparisons were made to determine where significant differences lay.

Results indicated that only the overall multivariate test of the gender by income effect for wives was significant, $F(18, 52) = 1.93$, $p < .03$. No other multivariate interactions or between-subject main effects were significant. Interactions of between-subject factors were not investigated because they did not involve husband and wife differences.

Findings from the follow-up univariate ANOVAS revealed a significant main effect of wives' income on wives' marital adjustment, $F(2, 34) = 5.21$, $p < .01$, but no similar effect on husbands' marital adjustment. However, follow-up comparisons, using Scheffe's post-hoc test, failed to detect an effect of wives' income levels on their marital

adjustment. Inspection of wives' marital adjustment means by their income levels indicated that wives earning \$15,000 or less had a mean marital adjustment score of 116; those wives earning between \$15,000 and \$25,000 had a marital adjustment mean score of 109.61; and wives earning more than \$25,000 had a mean marital adjustment score of 104.44. Although the data indicated that wives earning less than \$15,000 reported more marital adjustment than those earning more than \$25,000, Scheffe's test of comparisons failed to support this. Possible explanations for the discrepant findings between the overall multivariate and univariate tests and the non-significant findings from Scheffe's test is possibly due to a non-normal distribution or heterogeneous variance in some of the within-subject factors. With the exception of wives' income, husbands and wives did not differ significantly in their marital adjustment or self-disclosure behavior. Thus hypotheses 3 and 4 cannot be rejected. Table 4.9 presents the means and standard deviations for each of the self-disclosure and marital adjustment variables for husbands and wives.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 states that there is no relationship between husbands' marital adjustment and differences in their own and their spouses' self-disclosure output. To begin the test of hypothesis 5, Pearson product-moment correlations were computed for husbands' marital

Table 4.9

**Means and Standard Deviations for Husbands' and Wives'
Marital Adjustment, Self-Disclosure, and Marital
Conventionalization Scores**

Variables	Mean	S.D.	Range
Marital Adjustment H ^a	112.27	16.38	60-138
Marital Adjustment W ^b	110.92	13.66	75-139
Amount H	58.06	29.61	12-172
Amount W	61.47	32.13	15-163
Self-Reference % H	71.55	11.17	47.78-93.75
Self-Reference % W	72.21	12.23	43.33-92.31
Intimacy H	42.83	16.55	9-71
Intimacy W	42.83	15.45	13-68
Duration ^c H	433.90	145.90	114-600
Duration W	400.26	130.65	165-600
Marital Conventionalization H	37.40	27.77	0-97
Marital Conventionalization W	30.52	20.76	0-76

^aHusbands.^bWives.^cSeconds spent talking.

adjustment scores and differences in spouses' self-disclosure behaviors. As indicated in Table 4.10, differences in spouses' speech duration were negatively related to husbands' marital adjustment, $\chi = -.29$, $p < .05$.

No other self-disclosure difference variables produced significant results.

Table 4.10

Pearson Product-Moment Correlations between Marital Adjustment and Differences in Spouses' Self-Disclosure Output Scores

Self-Disclosure Output Variables	<u>Marital Adjustment</u>	
	Husbands (n=47)	Wives (n=47)
Amount D ^a	-.01	.05
Self-Reference % D	-.17	-.30*
Intimacy D	-.17	-.16
Duration D	-.29*	-.11

^aDifference in husband's and wife's score for each couple.

*p<.05.

A multiple regression analysis was also used to test the null hypothesis. Husbands' marital adjustment served as the criterion variable and differences in spouses' self-disclosure behavior scores served as predictors. Husbands' MCS scores and demographic variables, which included spouses' income, education, age, and years married, were also examined as predictors. Because the marital adjustment of husbands and wives is correlated, their marital adjustment scores were entered into a single

multiple regression analysis. Findings from wives' data will be discussed in Hypothesis 6.

Results indicated that the regression model was significant, $F(12, 33) = 3.88$, $p < .001$, yielding an R^2 of .59. The adjusted R^2 was .43. An examination of the regression coefficients revealed that only 2 of the 12 predictors reached statistical significance. The significant predictors included husbands' MCS, $t(33) = 3.19$, $p < .003$, and differences in the amount of independent statements expressed by spouses, $t(33) = 2.04$, $p < .05$. Although not significant, differences in speech duration had a marginal influence, $t(33) = -1.90$, $p < .07$ on husbands' reported marital adjustment (Table 4.11).

It appeared that a much smaller model would maximize the R^2 as adequately as the full model. Thus, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was also applied to the data. Results indicated that MCS alone produced a significant one-variable model, $F(1, 44) = 39.66$, $p < .0001$. The variance accounted for by MCS was 47% compared to 59% for the full model. With the exception of MCS, no other variables met the minimum significance criterion ($p < .15$) for inclusion in the model.

Partial correlation coefficients, based on the full regression model, were also computed to examine the effect of multicollinearity--intercorrelations among the dependent variables--on husbands' marital adjustment. The model

Table 4.11

Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Husbands' Marital Adjustment from Differences in Spouses' Self-Disclosure Output Scores

Source	SS	MS	df	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F
Model	7178.85	598.24	12	.59	.43	3.88*
Error	5089.52	154.23	33			
Predictor Variables				Regression Coefficients	t	p-value
Amount D ^a				.20	2.04	.05
Self-Reference % D				-.07	-.45	.65
Intimacy D				.11	.35	.73
Duration D				-.07	-1.90	.07
Income H ^b				-1.03	-.95	.35
Income W ^c				-2.34	-1.71	.10
Education H				-.48	-.41	.68
Education W				1.89	1.36	.18
Age H				-.21	-.38	.71
Age W				.55	.63	.53
Years Married				-.10	-.24	.82
Marital Conventionalization H	.29				3.19	.003

^aD=Differences in husband's and wife's score for each couple.

^bHusbands.

^cWives.

*p<.001.

employed difference scores for each self-disclosure predictor variable: Amount, Intimacy, Self-Reference Percent, and Duration. Additionally, husbands' and wives' income, education level, years married, and MCS scores were also included as predictor variables. Separate analyses, using identical predictor and criterion variables, were conducted for both husbands and wives. Analyses for wives' data will be discussed in Hypothesis 6.

Results from the partial correlation analysis, which are presented in Table 4.12, revealed only marginal significance for differences in Amount, $\rho_{pr} = .11$, $p < .05$, and a marginally significant effect for differences in Duration, $\rho_{pr} = .09$, $p = .07$. The most potent effect for husbands was MCS, $\rho_{pr} = .27$, $p < .001$. The variance explained by these variables was near zero, with the exception of differences in Duration, which contributed 1% of the unique variance to husbands' marital adjustment. Although husbands' income and education were significant in the zero-order correlations, their influence became negligible when partial correlation procedures were applied.

These results support the earlier suggestion that husbands' marital adjustment scores were more related to their MCS scores than to any other variable. Given this finding, MCS should be viewed as an important predictor rather than a confounding influence. Regardless, MCS has

Table 4.12Comparison of Zero-Order and Partial Correlations between Husbands' Marital Adjustment Scores and Differences in Spouses' Self-Disclosure Output Scores

Variables	r	r ²	pr	pr ²
Amount D ^a	-.01	.00	.11**	.00
Self-Reference % D	-.17	.03	.01	.00
Intimacy D	-.17	.03	.00	.00
Duration D	-.29**	.08	.09*	.01
Income H	-.34**	.12	.02	.00
Income W	-.12	.01	.07	.00
Education H	-.37**	.14	.01	.00
Education W	-.06	.00	.05	.00
Years Married	-.13	.02	.00	.00
Marital Conventionalization H	.70****	.49	.27***	.07

^aDifference in husband's and wife's score for each couple.

^bHusbands.

^cWives.

*p<.07.

**p<.05.

***p<.001.

****p<.0001.

been shown to unduly influence husbands' reported marital adjustment. That is, husbands may be assumed to be in a socially desirable response set.

To further examine Hypothesis 5, scatter plots were generated to determine whether there was evidence of a

reliable pattern of linear or curvilinear relationships between husbands' marital adjustment and differences in spouses' self-disclosure behaviors. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 graphically demonstrate a negative relationship between differences in Duration and husbands' marital adjustment. Figure 4.7 was plotted with the variance contributed by MCS; Figure 4.8 was plotted without the MCS influence. Indications are that the variance contributed by MCS had a slight effect on the relationship between differences in spouses' Duration and husbands' marital adjustment. None of the other plots indicated a clear linear pattern nor was there any evidence of a curvilinear relationship.

In consideration of the various findings already presented, the strongest indications are that differences in Amount had a positive relationship with husbands' marital adjustment, although the results were inconsistent. Differences in Duration, on the other hand, negatively influenced husbands' report of their marital adjustment. As in previous analyses, the results are fairly consistent. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was rejected.

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 states that there is no relationship between wives' marital adjustment and differences in their own and their spouses' self-disclosure output. As in previous analyses, Pearson product-moment correlations were used to determine the degree of association between wives'

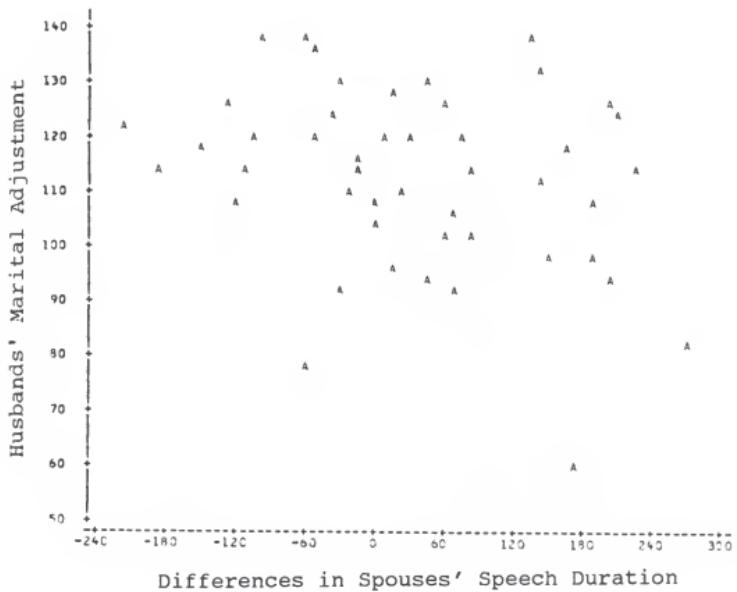


Figure 4.7 Relationship between Husbands' Marital Adjustment and Differences in Spouses' Speech Duration

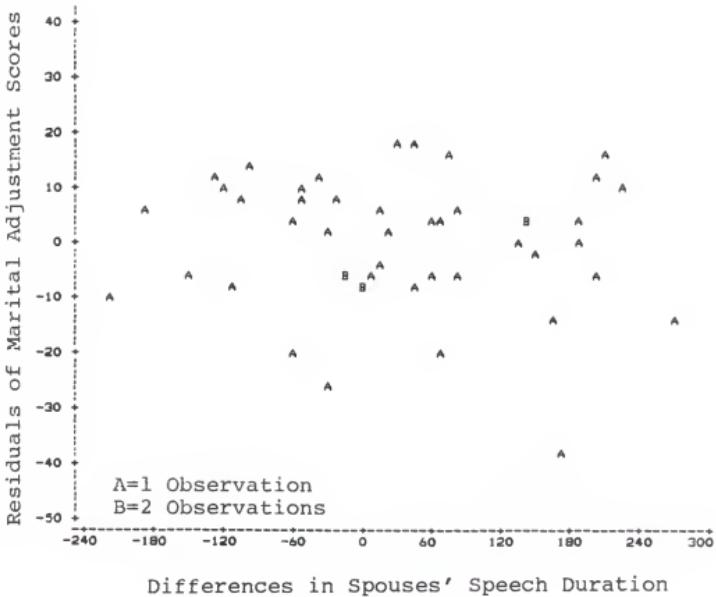


Figure 4.8 Relationship between Husbands' Marital Adjustment and Differences in Spouses' Speech Duration, while Adjusting for Marital Conventionalization

Note. One observation has missing values.
 Residuals refer to the difference between the observed score (with MCS) and the predicted score (without MCS).

marital adjustment and differences in spouses' self-disclosure output. Results, which were presented in Table 4.10, indicated that differences in the percent of self-references shared by spouses was negatively related to wives' marital adjustment, $r = -.30$, $p < .04$. Differences in Amount, Intimacy, nor Duration produced significant effects on wives' marital adjustment.

Hypothesis 6 was further tested with multiple regression procedures. Wives' marital adjustment scores served as the criterion variable. Predictors included (1) discrepancies in spouses' self-disclosure behavior scores, (2) wives' MCS scores, and (3) each spouses' age, income, education, and years married. The overall regression model was significant, $F(12, 33) = 5.94$, $p < .0001$, and accounted for 68% of the variance in wives' marital adjustment. After adjusting the R^2 to account for the large number of predictor variables, the model still explained 57% of the variance.

Of the twelve predictors originally entered into the model, four produced significant regression coefficients (Table 4.13): wives' MCS, $t(33) = 4.46$, $p < .0001$; wives' education $t(33) = 3.46$, $p < .0015$; wives' income, $t(33) = -3.46$, $p < .0015$; and differences in the amount of information expressed by spouses, $t(33) = 3.07$, $p < .004$.

A stepwise multiple regression analysis, using a significance criterion of $p < .15$, was then used to

Table 4.13Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Wives' Marital Adjustment from Differences in Spouses' Self-Disclosure Output Scores, and Demographic Variables

Source	SS	MS	df	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F
Model	5744.22	478.69	12	.68	.57	5.94*
Error	2660.21	80.61	33			
Predictor Variables				Regression Coefficients	t	p
Amount D ^a				.21	3.07	.004
Self-Reference % D				-.19	-1.73	.09
Intimacy D				-.15	-.69	.50
Duration D				-.04	-1.70	.10
Income H ^b				-.45	-.57	.57
Income W ^c				-3.27	-3.46	.002
Education H				-.40	-.50	.62
Education W				3.42	3.46	.002
Age H				-.07	-.17	.87
Age W				-.19	-.30	.77
Years Married				.28	.96	.35
Marital Conventionalization W				.34	4.46	.0001

^aD=Difference in husband's and wife's score for each couple.

^bHusbands.

^cWives.

*p<.0001.

determine the "best" model for predicting wives' marital adjustment. Results, which are presented in Table 4.14, indicated that a three-variable model, with an R^2 of .54, $F(3, 42) = 16.36$, $p < .0001$, maximally explained the criterion variance. These variables included wives' MCS scores, $F(1, 42) = 34.28$, $p < .0001$; wives' income, $F(1, 42) = 13.14$, $p < .0008$; and wives' education, $F(1, 42) = 11.00$, $p < .002$. Partial R^2 coefficients for these variables were .36, .06, and .12 respectively.

Partial correlations were then computed to examine the unique variance contributed by differences in spouses' self-disclosure behaviors to wives' marital adjustment. As with husbands, the self-disclosure variable most significantly related to wives' adjustment scores was difference in Amount, $pr = .22$, $p < .003$, which accounted for 5% of the variance. This variable, however, did not approach significance with the zero-order correlation. None of the other self-disclosure difference variables produced significant results with either of the correlation procedures.

Two demographic variables were also confirmed to be significant: wives' income, $pr = .32$, $p < .0003$; education, $pr = .26$, $p < .001$. These variables, although not of central interest in these partial analyses, were included to allow removal of all variance associated with the demographic variables and with the MCS variable. Table 4.15 provides

a summary of the partial correlations, which presents the clearest relationship between wives' marital adjustment and differences in spouses' self-disclosure behavior.

Table 4.14

Best Fit Stepwise Regression Model for Predicting Wives' Marital Adjustment from Differences in Spouses' Self-Disclosure Output Scores and Demographic Variables

	R ²	df	F	
Regression Equation	.54	3/42	16.36***	
Predictor Variables Entered	B-value	Partial R ²	Model R ²	F
Marital Conventionalization W ^a	.40	.36	.36	34.28***
Income W	-2.97	.06	.42	13.14**
Education W	2.91	.12	.54	11.00*

Note. The significant F values refer to the beta coefficients. A significance level of .15 was used as the cut-off criterion for entry into the model. No variables were removed from the model because of the significance criterion.

^aWives.

*p<.0001.

**p<.0008.

***p<.002.

As with husbands, scatter plots were generated to determine the existence of a linear or curvilinear relationship between wives' marital adjustment and differences in spouses' self-disclosure behavior.

Figure 4.9, which contains the MCS variance, indicate that differences in Self-Reference Percent has a clear negative linear relationship with wives' marital adjustment. When the variance associated with MCS was removed, the relationship between these variables became obscured (Figure 4.10). There was no evidence of a curvilinear

Table 4.15

Comparison of Zero-Order and Partial Correlation Coefficients between Wives' Marital Adjustment Scores and Differences in Spouses' Self-Disclosure Output Scores

Variables	r	r ²	pr	pr ²
Amount D ^a	.05	.00	.22**	.05
Self-Reference % D	-.30*	.09	.07	.00
Intimacy D	-.16	.03	.02	.00
Duration D	-.11	.01	.08	.00
Income H ^a	-.24	.06	.01	.00
Income W ^b	-.26	.07	.32****	.10
Education H	-.12	.01	.00	.00
Education W	.16	.03	.27***	.07
Years Married	-.06	.00	.01	.00
Marital Conventionalization W	.61	.37	.37*****	.14

^aDifferences in Husband's and Wife's score for each couple.

^bHusband.

Wife.

*p<.04.

**p<.003.

***p<.001.

****p<.0003.

*****p<.0001.

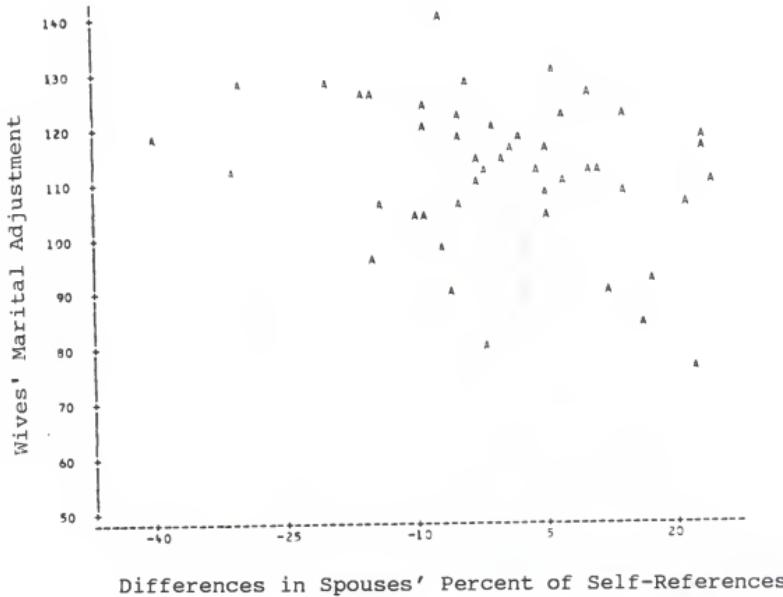


Figure 4.9 Relationship between Wives' Marital Adjustment and Differences in Spouses' Percent of Self-References

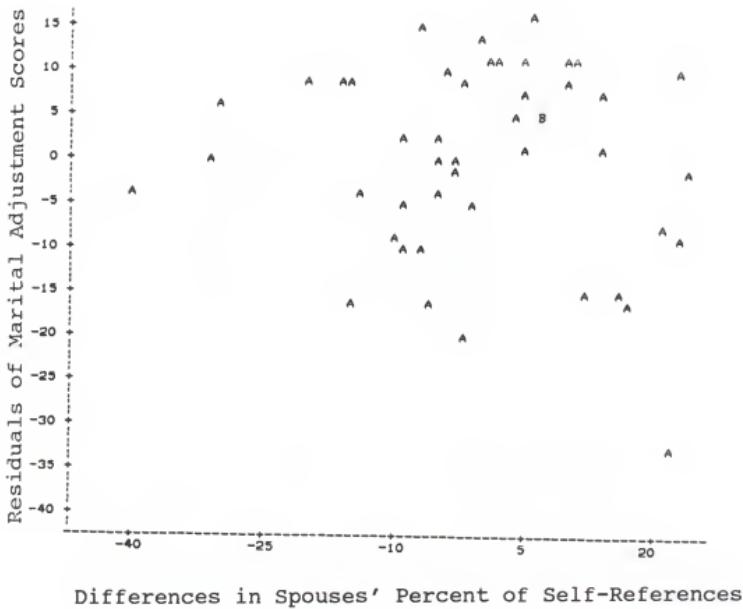


Figure 4.10 Relationship between Wives' Marital Adjustment and Differences in Spouses' Percent of Self-References, while Adjusting for Marital Conventionalization

Note. Residuals refer to the difference between the observed scored (with MCS) and the predicted score (without MCS). One observation had missing values.

relationship between wives' marital adjustment and differences in spouses' self-disclosure behaviors.

The preceding results present support that wives' marital adjustment is positively related to differences in the amount of independent statements made by spouses. Additionally, differences in the percent of self-references emitted by spouses was negatively related to wives' marital adjustment. These findings provide support to reject Hypothesis 6.

Hypothesis 7

Hypothesis 7 states that there is no difference in the marital adjustment of husbands or wives as a result of being overbenefited, underbenefited, or equal in self-disclosure Amount, Intimacy, Self-Reference Percent, and Duration. A repeated measures MANOVA design was used to test the null hypothesis. Husbands' and wives' marital adjustment scores were treated as separate dependent variables. The four self-disclosure dimensions served as independent variables with each having three levels of self-disclosure--overbenefited, equity, and underbenefited.

These levels were formed by generating a distribution chart of difference scores and then dividing them, as closely as possible, into three equal groups. Although this process of equal grouping has statistical merit, it lacks the ability to delineate those difference scores that fall at the dividing points for each level.

For each self-disclosure dimension, husbands' and wives' difference scores were determined by subtracting wives' scores from husbands' scores. Difference scores were then rank-ordered from negative to positive. Couples were then placed in three approximately equal groups according to the magnitude of difference in husbands' and wives' scores. Husbands who had the highest negative scores were classified as "overbenefited" in that they received more self-disclosure than they gave. On the other hand, "underbenefited" husbands were those husbands who self-disclosed more to their wives than their wives disclosed to them. Thus, they had the highest positive scores. Spouses who were somewhat equal in their self-disclosure to one another were considered to have self-disclosure "equity."

Because the overbenefited and underbenefited self-disclosure scores for husbands and wives were reciprocal, "underbenefited" wives are represented in the analysis by overbenefited husbands; "overbenefited" wives are represented by underbenefited husbands. Means and standard deviations for each self-disclosure dimension by level are presented in Table 4.16.

Results indicated that the overall multivariate analysis of variance, using Wilks' lambda criterion, did not reach statistical significance, $F(1, 38) = 0.07$, $p < .79$, nor did the multivariates for the four main effects.

Table 4.16

Means and Standard Deviations for Husbands' and Wives' Marital Adjustment by Self-Disclosure Equity and Inequity Levels

Self-Disclosure Dimensions	n	M	SD
Amount D^a			
Overbenefited H ^b	15	-39.53	23.35
Equity	15	-2.67	6.50
Underbenefited H	17	28.82	23.17
Self-Reference % D			
Overbenefited H	15	-15.81	10.14
Equity	16	-0.53	3.77
Underbenefited H	16	14.69	6.19
Intimacy D			
Overbenefited H	15	-15.87	7.77
Equity	15	-1.67	2.38
Underbenefited	17	15.65	8.48
Duration D^c			
Overbenefited H	15	-95.80	57.12
Equity	16	23.94	30.35
Underbenefited H	16	164.56	55.10

Note. Overbenefited husbands = underbenefited wives;
underbenefited husbands = overbenefited wives.

^aDifference in husband's and wife's score for each couple.

^bHusbands.

^cDuration was measured in seconds.

Only the multivariate interaction effect between gender and duration approached significance, $F(2, 76) = 2.80$, $p < .07$. Findings from the univariate analyses were also consistent with the findings from the multivariate tests. This indicates that husbands' and wives' marital adjustment is not related to whether they receive more self-disclosure, give more self-disclosure, or whether they disclose equally in the relationship. Hypothesis 7, therefore, was not rejected.

Marital Conventionalization Influence

To determine the influence of marital conventionalization (MCS) on the criterion variable marital adjustment, multiple regression analyses were conducted with and without spouses' own MCS scores as a predictor variable. As in Hypothesis 1 and 2, predictor variables included both husbands' and wives' self-disclosure behavior (Amount, Self-Reference Percent, Intimacy, Duration) and salient demographic variables (spouses' income, education, age and years married). Separate multiple regressions were computed for husbands and wives.

Multiple regression analyses were first conducted without MCS as a predictor variable. Results from husbands' data produced a significant model $F(15, 30) = 2.10$, $p < .04$). The R^2 analysis accounted for 51% of the variance in the criterion variable; the adjusted R^2 accounted for 26.83% of the variance. Husbands' speech

duration, $t(30) = -3.017$, $p < .005$, and the amount of independent thoughts expressed by wives, $t(30) = -2.72$, $p < .01$, yielded significant parameter estimates. When husbands' MCS was included as a predictor, the probability level of the model significantly improved, $F(16, 29) = 2.86$, $p < .007$, along with a 10% increase in explained variance, $R^2 = .61$; adjusted $R^2 = .40$. The predictive power of husbands' speech duration, $t(29) = -1.915$, $p < .07$, and wives' amount of independent thoughts, $t(29) = -1.83$, $p < .0770$, were reduced to marginal significance. On the other hand, MCS was revealed to be highly significant, $t(29) = 2.73$, $p < .01$. Thus, MCS was interpreted as a socially desirable response set rather than a true expression of respondents' evaluation of their marital relationship. However, this seemed to be particularly true of husbands' marital adjustment.

The influence of MCS on wives' marital adjustment was not as pronounced as that of husbands', although its influence was also significant. The first multiple regression, which excluded MCS as a predictor, produced a highly significant model, $F(15, 30) = 2.75$, $p < .009$. Multiple R^2 accounted for 58% of the variance while the adjusted R^2 accounted for 37% of the variance in wives' marital adjustment. Five of the 15 parameter estimates were significant. These included the following: (1) wives' amount of independent thoughts expressed,

$t(30) = -3.08$, $p < .005$, (2) the intimacy level of wives' self-disclosure, $t(30) = 2.14$, $p < .04$, (3) the percent of self-references expressed by wives, $t(30) = 2.70$, $p < .01$, (4) wives' income, $t(30) = -2.07$, $p < .05$, and (5) wives' education, $t(30) = 2.37$, $p < .02$.

When MCS was included as a predictor variable, the significance level of the model greatly improved, $F(16, 29) = 5.63$, $p < .0001$. The R^2 accounted for 76% of the criterion variance, an increase of approximately 18% over the previous model, while the adjusted R^2 accounted for 62% of the variance, an improvement of 25% over the model where MCS had been excluded. It is also important to note that with the addition of MCS to the model, the discrepancy between the model R^2 and the adjusted R^2 dropped considerably. Additionally, none of the parameter estimates were significantly influenced by the presence of the MCS variable, indicating that wives' self-disclosure behavior during the experiment did not appear to be a conscious attempt to respond in a maritally conventional manner. Duration of husbands' speech, $t(29) = -2.08$, $p < .05$, however, emerged as significant when MCS was added to the model; it was not present when MCS was excluded.

Further review of husbands' and wives' MCS scores seem justified. To determine whether husbands' and wives' income, education, and years married (between-subject factors) had an influence on their marital

conventionalization scores (within-subject factors), a repeated-measures multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), using Wilks' lambda criterion, was computed. The MCS scores of husbands and wives served as the dependent variables which comprised the repeated measures factor called "gender." Results indicated that the overall multivariate test of the two within-subject dependent variables was significant for a gender by wives' education interaction effect, $F(3, 35) = 4.89$, $p < .006$. The overall multi-variate test also showed that husbands' education had a significant main effect in the model, $F(6, 68) = 2.32$, $p < .04$. Findings from the follow-up univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) supported the finding that there was a significant interaction effect in the model for wives' education on husbands' MCS scores, $F(12, 35) = 3.70$, $p < .001$, but not for wives' MCS scores, $F(12, 35) = .90$, $p < .56$.

To determine which level of wives' education influenced husbands' MCS scores, Scheffe's post-hoc test of comparisons was computed. Findings from Scheffe's test were consistent with the findings from the multivariate test. Results revealed that wives who had a lower level of education (high school diploma or less) had husbands who were significantly higher on marital conventionalization ($M = 64.75$) than those husbands whose wives had a B.A. college degree ($M = 13.11$). Additionally, wives' who had a

graduate degree or some graduate study experience had husbands who were significantly higher on marital conventionalization ($M = 44.88$) than those husbands whose wives had a B.A. college degree ($M = 13.11$).

The follow-up univariate ANOVA for husbands' marital conventionalization was significant $F(12, 35) = 3.70$, $p < .001$, and consistent with the overall multivariate model. The between-subjects main effect for husbands' education on husbands' marital conventionalization scores was also significant as demonstrated in the Type III sums of squares, $F(3, 35) = 4.37$, $p < .01$. Scheffe's test of comparisons revealed that husbands who had a high school diploma or less were significantly higher in marital conventionalization ($M = 70.33$) than those who had an AA college degree ($M = 27.93$), those who had a B.A. college degree ($M = 28.33$), or those with a graduate degree (or some graduate experience) ($M = 33.58$). There were no other significant differences between husbands' educational levels and their tendency toward marital conventionalization.

CHAPTER V DISCUSSION

The strongest predictor of marital adjustment for both husbands and wives was marital conventionalization, the tendency for spouses to distort their appraisal of their marriage in a socially desirable direction. This finding is consistent with the general literature which indicates that self-report measures of marital adjustment are heavily influenced by social desirability.

It still remains unclear whether marital conventionalization was a confounding variable in this study or whether it represents an additional predictor variable that warrants investigation. Of course, Edmonds (1967) would argue that responding out of social desirability is always a confound if it obscures spouses' true perceptions. Therefore, Edmonds, Withers, and Dibatista (1972) present a convincing argument for the necessity of controlling social desirability. Through partial correlation techniques, they held marital conventionalization constant. Previous significant relationships between various conservatism indexes (i.e., church attendance) and marital adjustment, were "washed out" when marital conventionalization was held constant. When the conservatism indexes were correlated with marital

conventionalization, while holding marital adjustment constant, essentially no reduction was found in the magnitude of the correlations. This provided convincing evidence for Edmonds et al. that marital adjustment tests are heavily contaminated by social desirability.

However, the results of this study demonstrate that the influence of marital conventionalization, although highly significant, may not be as pervasive as Edmonds et al. Dibatista indicated. Separate multiple regression analyses for husbands and wives were performed to determine the influence of marital conventionalization on each spouse's marital adjustment score. First, marital conventionalization was included as a predictor, and then the same data was reanalyzed without the marital conventionalization variable. Although the presence of marital conventionalization significantly improved the amount of variance accounted for by the overall model, the salience of the predictor variables remained fairly stable.

When marital conventionalization was excluded as a predictor of husbands' marital adjustment, only husbands' speech duration and wives' amount of independent thoughts were significant predictors. These same predictors were reduced to marginal significance when marital conventionalization was added to the model. Other changes in the model included the emergence of marital conventionalization as the strongest and most salient

predictor, and a 10% increase in the overall model variance. This indicated that although marital conventionalization had a strong influence, its presence did not mask the results.

The influence of marital conventionalization on wives' marital adjustment scores was not as pronounced. Although the predictive power of the model increased by 18% when marital conventionalization was added, the significance of the regression coefficients remained fairly stable. However, there were two significant changes in the regression model. First, marital conventionalization became the strongest predictor of wives' marital adjustment. Second, husbands' speech duration emerged as a significant predictor. This indicated that wives were less influenced by marital conventionalization than husbands.

Further exploration of the data did show a significant difference in husbands' and wives' response to marital conventionalization. Husbands who had a high school diploma (or less education), were significantly more influenced by marital conventionalization than husbands at other educational levels. Quite interestingly, wives' educational level significantly influenced husbands' response to marital conventionalization. Wives who had a high school diploma (or less education) and those who had some graduate study experience had husbands who were higher on marital conventionalization.

There was also some indication that the longer husbands spoke and the more they said, the less likely they were to respond in a socially desirable manner. There was no relationship between wives' speech duration or amount of statements and marital conventionalization. Contrary to what one might expect, marital conventionalization was not related to husbands' intimacy level or their percent of self-references. However, wives' percent of self-references was positively and significantly related to marital conventionalization, indicating that the more personal their statements, the more likely they were to respond in a socially desirable manner. This may reflect an attempt by wives to either consciously or unconsciously minimize the distress in the relationship by exaggerating positives.

These findings stress the need for researchers to be aware of differences in husbands' and wives' tendency toward social desirability responding and how spouses may reinforce this response tendency in their partners.

Because the effect of marital conventionalization was a secondary finding in this study, no attempt was made to control for its influence. It is possible that the effect of social desirability was minimized by allowing spouses a 15-minute desensitization period (a blind pre-experimental self-disclosure phase) at the beginning of each experimental session. It was based on the assumption that

that the more comfortable spouses become with the environmental setting, the more likely they are to present themselves and their relationship in a truthful manner. Of course, further research is needed to substantiate whether this procedure, or any other experimental procedure, can effectively control social desirability responding. If so, this would provide an option for those researchers who do not wish to investigate social desirability as a primary research variable.

In summary, it is important to recognize that social desirability is likely to be the strongest single predictor of marital adjustment for black husbands and wives. If the literature is a reliable indicator, then social desirability may be the strongest predictor of marital adjustment for white spouses as well. Rather than ignoring it as an influence in marital research, understanding spouses' adjustment to marriage may be best served by further exploring this phenomenon. This is particularly important given the findings in this study that husbands and wives had different patterns of social desirability responding. Additionally, the fact that the marital conventionalization variable did not completely alter the findings in this study indicates that social desirability may indeed represent some unique contribution to spouses' adjustment to their marriage.

Until this issue is clarified, social desirability should be considered an important variable in marital adjustment research. After all, there are a wide range of possible interpretations for the meaning of social desirability; it may represent commitment to the marriage or more simply, politeness in the face of marital distress.

With regard to the self-disclosure behaviors, findings indicated that the duration of time that husbands spent talking was negatively related to both husbands' and wives' marital adjustment, although only marginally for wives. The fact that husbands' speech duration was either significant or marginally significant across all statistical analyses (even when marital conventionalization was held constant) provided even stronger evidence that this aspect of self-disclosure negatively impacted on husbands' marital adjustment.

In comparison, wives' speech duration was not significantly related to their own or their husbands' marital adjustment. A possible explanation for these findings is that while husbands spend time communicating about problems they may feel helpless to change, wives spend time listening to these same problems. Additionally, the stress that this poses on wives may, in part, be related to a greater need for wives to understand the perceptual world of their husbands. Thus, they are less likely to complain about their husbands' negative

communications. Consequently, the longer that spouses engage in or listen to communication that is stressful, the more likely that the relationship will be negatively affected.

The positive side of this argument is the finding that the longer spouses talked, the more intimate and ego-involved their conversation became. This indicates that if spouses can tolerate negative communication for a period of time, both spouses are likely to be "rewarded" with greater intimacy in their communication.

Another explanation is related to Levinger and Senn's (1967) finding that distressed husbands and wives were more likely to communicate negative feelings than nondistressed spouses. Because of the moderately high intimacy level of the disclosure stimuli used in this study, husbands, who may have already been distressed, may have been indirectly encouraged to spend more time sharing their feelings. Some support for this explanation is also provided by Kirby and Davis' (1972) research with volunteer subjects. They found that couples who volunteered to participate in research and actually followed through were more likely to have been separated for marital problems at some time during their marriage than those who volunteered, but did not participate.

The amount of statements communicated by wives was also found to be negatively associated with husbands' marital

adjustment, but this variable was not as powerful in predicting marital adjustment as husbands' speech duration. One possible interpretation of this finding is that husbands, who were already distressed by environmental circumstances, were overwhelmed with the additional "burden" of listening to the concerns of their wives. Therefore, their behavior was more likely to communicate annoyance. Wives, in turn, may have perceived this "burden," thus, they were reluctant to communicate their own concerns for fear of adding to their husbands' burden. This may explain why wives' duration was not significantly related to wives' marital adjustment, and why wives' marital adjustment was related negatively to the amount of statements that they communicated to their husbands.

The findings in this study are not consistent with the literature on equity. Where previous studies with white couples found that self-disclosure inequity was related to relationship distress (Davidson, 1980; Davidson, Balswick, & Halverson, 1983; Hansen, 1984), no such evidence was found in this study. Quite surprisingly, just the reverse effect was found for one of the self-disclosure behaviors. Differences in the amount of information shared by spouses had a positive relationship with both spouses' marital adjustment.

Given the earlier findings in this study that wives' amount of statements and husbands' speech duration were

negatively related to both spouses' marital adjustment, it is plausible that in order to deal with the imbalance in communication (and perhaps restore balance), these spouses may have developed an implied contract that wives would be supportive of their husbands' disclosure, but husbands would not be supportive of their wives'. Additionally, the fact that wives' marital adjustment was related positively to their own self-disclosure behavior (self-reference percent) further suggests that wives may have assumed the role of communication caretaker, while their own self-disclosure needs go unmet.

Contrary to equity research, differences in spouses' level of self-disclosure on the other self-disclosure behaviors did not have a significant effect on spouses' marital adjustment. The reasons for these findings are speculative. First, black spouses may place less importance on disclosure in their relationship than white spouses. Second, the method of assessing self-disclosure--self-report versus behavioral--influences and perhaps determines the relationship between self-disclosure and marital adjustment.

Although Hansen's (1984) findings supported the contention that self-disclosure inequity is related to relationship distress, this was true only for self-report measures of self-disclosure. He did not detect a relationship between differences in self-disclosure and

marital adjustment with behavioral measures. A likely explanation for these findings is that with behavioral self-disclosure, spouses could monitor and thus reinforce each other's self-disclosure behavior. Of course, this is not possible with self-report measures. Therefore, spouses were operating under the norm of reciprocity, which overshadowed the effect of self-disclosure differences. Support for this view was also provided by the finding that spouse's individual self-disclosure behaviors, with the exception of self-reference percent, correlated highly with each other.

The demographic variables of income, education, age, and years married were not the primary variables in this study; however, they were examined as possible influences on spouses' self-disclosure behavior.

Age and years married did not influence significantly the relationship between self-disclosure and marital adjustment. However, wives' age was a positive predictor of wives' marital adjustment in the stepwise regression analysis. This finding is deemed inconclusive because of the nonsignificant association between age and marital adjustment in the zero-order correlation and multiple regression analyses.

A likely explanation for the significant association in the stepwise procedure is that age, which was least related to the other variables in the model, made a unique

contribution to the overall prediction model. Because the goal of the stepwise procedure is to maximize the variance by including in the model those variables that discriminate most, age was selected, although it may not produce the best model. This issue has been raised to point out that one should exercise caution when using the stepwise procedure. Terminating the data analyses without adequate exploration of the data could result in misleading conclusions. This supports the use of several statistical procedures in this study to cross-validate the findings. Additional supportive analyses are critical when using the stepwise procedure in exploratory studies.

When considering the relationship between the other demographic variables and spouses' marital adjustment, only income and education had significant zero-order correlations. For husbands, their own income and education were negatively related to their marital adjustment. However, these variables were not significantly related to wives' marital adjustment. When the demographic and self-disclosure variables were included in the regression analyses as predictors of husbands' and wives' marital adjustment, the influence of income and education became even more apparent. The association between these variables and husbands' marital adjustment remained significant. Wives' income, on the other hand, emerged as a negative predictor of their marital adjustment; wives'

education emerged as a positive predictor. These demographic variables had not been shown previously to be significantly correlated with wives' marital adjustment.

Results also clearly indicated that income significantly influenced the relationship between self-disclosure and marital adjustment. The zero-order correlations revealed that only wives' income was significantly related to both husbands' and wives' self-disclosure behaviors. Among husbands' self-disclosure behaviors, wives' income was negatively related to their percent of self-references and speech duration. Among wives' self-disclosure behaviors, both the amount of thoughts that they shared and their speech duration was negatively related to their income. This negative association between wives' income and self-disclosure persisted for all self-disclosure behaviors for both husbands and wives. However, the associations were not significant.

These findings indicate that spouses' marital adjustment, particularly for husbands, may be more related to income and education than spouses' actual self-disclosure behavior. Additionally, relationship stress, precipitated by issues related to income and education, may be so pervasive that these issues become the focus of communication between spouses. This was suggested by the negative relationship between two of the self-disclosure

variables--speech duration and amount of independent statements--and spouses' marital adjustment.

Although the intent of this study was not to investigate the predictive power of the demographic variables on spouses' marital adjustment, the strong influence of income and education does suggest that these variables play a significant role in the marital adjustment of black spouses. Future research should include these variables as possible mediators of the association between marital adjustment and communication variables.

Limitations of the Study

This study has two important limitations that restrict the generalizability of the findings. These include the use of (1) nonprobability sampling procedures, and (2) a marital adjustment scale that was not standardized with the research population.

Because the subjects in this study were chosen from among those who volunteered, external validity was perhaps compromised. However, the observation that an increased number of researchers are opting for an accessible volunteer population indicates that the concerns about volunteer subjects have been minimized. Kruglanski (1973) supports this position. He argues that the critical research issue is not external validity, but internal validity. Regardless of the prevalence of volunteer samples, there is no guarantee that these subjects

represent the population to which the results would be generalized.

The issue of random versus nonrandom sampling procedures is particularly problematic in marital research, which often relies on both partners' participation. This problem is compounded when black subjects, particularly black couples, are sought as research participants. Consistently, literature has indicated that blacks are apprehensive about having outsiders "intrude" into their personal lives (Brannon, 1983; Hall & Tucker, 1985; Tucker, Chennault, & Mulkerne, 1981). Therefore, participating in research is likely to be approached by blacks with great apprehension. Consequently, the likelihood of obtaining an adequate sample of black couples becomes even more remote.

Given these research obstacles, the lack of generalizability may be a small compromise when one considers the lack of research in the area of black marital relationships. Certainly, weaknesses inherent in research studies should be viewed seriously; however, volunteer research may be the most practical method of securing a community-based sample of black subjects. However, attempts should be made to minimize the effect of errors related to nonprobability sampling procedures. Although the results from this study and other studies that use volunteer samples can be useful, findings utilizing volunteer subjects should be interpreted with caution.

Further, greater emphasis should be placed on replicating the findings from studies that have used volunteer subjects.

The second issue relates to the validity and reliability of the marital adjustment instrument. Because the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, which was used in this study, did not use black spouses in its standardization sample, there is some question about its usefulness with black couples. A critical review of Spanier's Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test revealed that although they are the most widely used measures of marital adjustment, they have been used minimally with black couples. In fact, no studies were found where the Dyadic Adjustment Scale had been used with black spouses. In the few studies where the Marital Adjustment Test had been used, a simple comparison of the means for the standardization sample and the research sample was made.

Although both the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Marital Adjustment Test demonstrate adequate reliability and validity with white couples, these properties have not been established with black couples. The decision, then, to use the Dyadic Adjustment Scale was based on its use of the continuous, rather than the unit (item) method of scoring. (This issue was discussed in Chapter III.) Essentially, the unit weight method assigns item scores on

the basis of the normative sample's responses to each item. Higher weights are assigned to those responses that were most endorsed by the normative group; lower weights are assigned to those responses that were least endorsed.

In contrast, the continuous method assigns weights based on subjects' responses on a Likert response continuum. The highest score is generally given to response choices at the highest end of the response continuum; the lowest score is given to responses at the lowest end of the continuum. The direction of scoring depends on whether the item is theoretically determined to be related negatively or positively to marital adjustment.

Therefore, unit weights assume consistency of marital values across all populations. Thus, it is assumed that each spouse will assign the same degree of importance to a particular item as it relates to his or her own marital adjustment. This approach does not allow for the possibility that spouses from different cultures and ethnic groups may place different values on those same marital satisfaction items. Of course, would result in different unit weights being assigned to the various response choices, which could result in vastly different total scores on the same marital adjustment instrument.

Additionally, the use of unit weight scores is more likely to result in an over- or under-estimation of the marital adjustment scores of black spouses. For instance,

Mejia (1981) found that Hispanic couples had a higher mean marital adjustment score on the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test than non-Hispanic couples. Tucker, James, and Turner (1985) found that the mean marital adjustment score for their sample of white couples was almost 14 points higher than the mean score for their black couples.

Over- or under-estimating marital adjustment scores also is possible with measurement instruments that use the continuous method of scoring, although they are less likely to occur in these instances. For example, the English couples in Hooley and Hahlweg's (1989) study had a mean Dyadic Adjustment Scale score that was almost 10 points lower than the mean score for the standardization couples. In contrast, the mean marital adjustment score for the husbands in this study was 2.5 points lower than the mean Dyadic Adjustment Scale score for the normative group; the mean score for the wives was 3.9 points lower.

Although there is little difference between the mean marital adjustment scores for the couples in this study and those of the normative group, one cannot assume that the Dyadic Adjustment Scale is a reliable and valid measure of black spouses' marital adjustment. However, this does lend more credibility to the findings for this sample of black couples. As in all instances where a test is used to assess some characteristic of a population other than the

population it was normed on, results should be viewed conservatively.

Clearly, there is a need for a reliable and valid measure of marital adjustment for black couples. Rather than develop new scales, attention should be directed toward establishing reliability and validity on those measures that have proven to be empirically sound and which are currently being used widely in marital research.

Suggestions for Future Research

Consistently, research has shown that spouses' report of the self-disclosure that is given and received in the relationship is related to marital satisfaction (Davidson, 1980; Hansen, 1984; Hendrick, 1981; Jorgensen & Gaudy, 1980; Levinger & Senn, 1967). Of the few studies (Hansen, 1984; Hansen & Schuldt, 1984; Hooley & Hahlweg, 1989) that have investigated the effect of behavioral self-disclosure on marital satisfaction, self-disclosure was not found to be a strong predictor. This strongly suggests a need for comparative studies of self-report versus behavioral methods for assessing the effect of self-disclosure in marriage.

The finding that only two behavioral measures of self-disclosure--husbands' speech duration and wives' self-reference percent--consistently predicted the marital satisfaction of husbands and wives in this study leads one to consider whether self-report measures of self-disclosure

are better predictors of marital satisfaction than behavioral measures. Some support for this is provided by Hansen (1984) who found that self-report measures of self-disclosure were stronger predictors of marital satisfaction than the behavioral measures of amount, intimacy, and duration. In fact, Hansen found only one significant zero-order correlation between behavioral measures of self-disclosure and marital satisfaction.

Hooley and Hahlweg (1989) also found a nonsignificant association between marital satisfaction and behavioral self-disclosure. Explanations for these findings could be related to (1) the characteristics of their sample, which included German and English couples who were experiencing marital distress, or (2) their method of defining and coding self-disclosure. Hooley and Hahlweg did not operationalize self-disclosure, nor did they offer explanations for the nonsignificant results. Thus, it would be difficult to speculate further on their findings.

Another reason for the mixed results from the two methods of self-disclosure is suggested by Margolin, Hattem, John, and Yost's (1985) research on perception. They found little consensus between couples' ratings of their own interactions and those of observers. However, consensus between trained coders and couples was much higher when the interactions of a stranger couple was being coded. Additionally, agreement was much higher between

husbands and wives than the agreement between spouses and trained coders. This demonstrates that the perception of the marital relationship from the "insiders'" perspective (i.e., spouses' self-report) is likely to be different from the perspective of the "outsider" who codes the "insiders'" behavior. It also suggests the need for research that investigates whether spouses' codings of their own self-disclosure behavior would be a better predictor of spouses' marital adjustment than self-disclosure behavior that is coded by "outsiders."

Because behavioral self-disclosure did not produce strong associations with marital adjustment for the husbands in this sample, one must consider whether spouses' report of their self-disclosure behavior may have produced stronger associations. Because of the limited research using behavioral methods to assess self-disclosure, it would be too speculative to make statements as to the efficacy of either method. It is suggested that future assessment of marital interaction include both self-report and actual self-disclosure behavior to help clarify which of these perspectives is most predictive of marital adjustment.

Because this research was exploratory, it has stimulated many new questions for future research. In general, there is a need to learn more about the marital interaction of black husbands and wives. This is

particularly true of husbands. Although some light was shed on what constitutes marital distress for husbands, little is known about what facilitates their marital adjustment. Because the depth or intimacy level of spouses' self-disclosure was not related to either spouses' marital adjustment, there is a greater need to understand what facilitates emotional closeness in black relationships.

Finally, one must question whether the lack of association between most behavioral measures of self-disclosure and marital adjustment is a function of the self-disclosure task or some characteristic of the sample being studied. Hopefully, this study will prompt research that will provide further clarification on this issue, as well as stimulate many new areas of research into the interpersonal relationships of black spouses.

Implications

The results from this study present some considerations for psychotherapists who intervene in the marital relationships of black couples. Because speech duration and the amount of statements communicated by spouses had a negative impact on spouses' marital adjustment, it is suggested that intervention focus on "how" communication is shared. This may seem to be an oversimplified statement, but attention to this issue may be more critical to relationship maintenance than actual self-disclosure.

It is suggested that much of the conflict in black marital relationships center around how spouses define the problem, how they interpret each other's motives, and how they view black men and women in general (e.g., black women as overbearing and black men as irresponsible).

It is likely that negative expectations and negative communication patterns in these relationships have created communication apprehensiveness, thereby preventing intimate self-disclosure from occurring. If this is the case, spouses may have learned to avoid conflict by avoiding communication. Thus, they are less likely to perceive emotional support from their partner. Therefore, spouses could benefit from therapeutic intervention that focuses on the development of more effective coping strategies, stress management, conflict resolution training, and the creation of a positive communication environment. The latter may be most effectively accomplished by reframing negative behavior and helping spouses uncover the positive intent of their partner's behavior.

Summary and Conclusions

In general, giving or receiving self-disclosure, in general, may not be particularly important for the marital adjustment of the husbands in this sample. On the other hand, wives' adjustment in the marriage was positively related to their disclosure of personal thoughts and

feelings to their husbands. Husbands' disclosure was not related to husbands' or wives' marital adjustment.

Differences in spouses' level of intimate self-disclosure did not affect husbands' nor wives' perception of their marital relationship. However, the relationship seemed to be more adjusted when there was a discrepancy in the amount of information communicated by spouses. This was true regardless of whether husbands or wives were the recipient of more or less disclosure than they gave.

These findings indicate that although there are some similarities in the self-disclosure patterns of black spouses and white spouses, black spouses appear to have developed some different expectations about the role of self-disclosure in the marital relationship. Consequently, they have also developed some unique communication strategies for dealing with relationship distress.

APPENDIX A
SUBJECT RECRUITMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Black couples needed for UF doctoral study on communication in black marital relationships. Couples will be paid \$10.00 for their participation and be given the option to attend a free seminar on communication within black marital relationships. Contact Shirley Chennault or Dr. Carolyn Tucker, Department of Psychology, 392-9436.

APPENDIX B
BRIEFING FOR SUBJECTS RESPONDING
TO RECRUITMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for responding to my request for black couples to participate in a research project on communication in black marital relationships. I am a black graduate student in Counseling Psychology at the University of Florida and am conducting this research as part of my doctoral study. Dr. Carolyn Tucker, my doctoral committee chairperson and associate professor in the Department of Psychology, will be working very closely with me.

Before providing you with details about the study, I need to ask you a few questions to determine whether you meet the criteria for participation:

1. Are both you and your spouse possibly willing to participate in the study?
2. Are you and your spouse native, black Americans?
3. Are you and your spouse currently living together?
4. How long have you been married to your present spouse?

(If the couple meets the criteria, as indicated by positive responses to items 1-3 above and a response of at least 1 year to item 4, then the following details will be provided.)

Appendix B--continued

I am pleased that both you and your spouse are interested in this research project. As you may be aware, much of the existing marital research has ignored blacks or has included a small number of blacks in the study. This indicates that knowledge many people have about black marriages has come directly out of research on white couples. This does not indicate that there is no similarity in the way couples relate, regardless of race, but rather that black couples may view some areas of their marriage quite differently from non-black couples. Your participation, and that of other couples like you, will begin to address this concern.

You and your spouse will be required to talk with each other about several topics carefully selected by the researcher. These topics will not embarrass you and hopefully, will not be stressful. Afterwards, you will be asked to complete three short questionnaires. The discussions will be audiotaped so that the researcher can have adequate time to closely examine what goes on between two spouses during the process of communication. Once your audiotape has been reviewed and transcribed, it will be erased. The study should take approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete.

Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to the audiotape and the information you provide.

Appendix B--continued

To insure that your identity remains anonymous, you and your spouse will be assigned identification numbers. We are not interested in individual responses but in the responses provided by all husbands and wives as a group.

Before participating in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent form indicating that you understand the purpose and requirements of the study. This will in no way obligate you to participate against your wishes. I feel that it is important to stress that participation is completely voluntary; you may withdraw at any time during the study. I do hope, however, that you share my enthusiasm for this project and will give me your full support.

Each couple will receive \$10.00 for participating in this study. Additionally, a seminar explaining the results and its applicability to the marital relationship will be held after the completion of the study.

I realize that my explanation has been quite detailed but I wanted to provide you with as much information as possible to aid in your decision. At this time, I would be happy to answer any other questions that you may have regarding the study.

Having heard the details of the study, would you like to participate?

IF NO: Thank you for listening. Although you have

Appendix B--continued

chosen not to participate, both you and your spouse are welcome to attend the communication seminar. May I have your name, address, and telephone number so that I may contact you with details of the seminar? Thank you again for your interest.

IF YES: Thank you for agreeing to participate. May I have your name, address, and telephone number? I will be available for an appointment on _____ at _____. Which of these times will be most convenient for you and your wife (husband)? Mr. (Mrs.) _____, I look forward to meeting with you and your wife (husband) on _____ at _____.

Again, thank you for your time and interest. Should you need to speak with me prior to your appointment, you may contact me at the Department of Psychology, 392-9436.

APPENDIX C
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Communication in marriage has been found to be related to couples' marital satisfaction. Although this is generally true, few research studies have included black couples. Thus, this research study is being conducted to gain knowledge about communication between black spouses and to determine if and how communication is related to their marital satisfaction.

Participation in this study requires approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes. Both you and your spouse will be asked to talk to each other about three topics. These topics will be somewhat personal but will in no way be embarrassing. You may say as much or as little as you choose. These discussions will be audiotaped and later put into written form for data analysis. Additionally, you will be given three short questionnaires to complete.

Your questionnaire responses and audiotaped discussions will be confidential. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to your responses and the audiotapes. These materials will be kept in a locked file in the Psychology Department at the University of Florida. To insure that your identity remains anonymous, you and your spouse will be assigned identification numbers which will be used instead of your names.

Appendix C--continued

There are no anticipated risks. Care will be taken to minimize any discomfort you may experience because of the discussions or the audiotaping of them. The potential benefit of this study is increased understanding of communication in black marital relationships and identification of some ways of improving the marital happiness of black couples. The research findings will be presented in a free seminar for participants. Couples will also receive \$10.00 for their participation.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

If you still desire to participate, please read the statement below and sign it along with a witness. Return the signed copy to the researcher; keep the second copy for yourself.

I HAVE READ AND I UNDERSTAND THE PROCEDURE DESCRIBED ABOVE. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCEDURE AND I HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF THIS DESCRIPTION.

Signatures:

Subject _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

Principal Investigator _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D
VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBJECTS

First of all, I would like to thank both of you for assisting me with this research project. As you are already aware, the purpose of this study is to look at the way black couples communicate in their marriage. As I explained earlier, your conversations will be audiotaped so that the researchers will have adequate time to examine what goes on during marital communication. Once your audiotape has been reviewed, and your words put into writing, the audiotape will be erased. You will also be asked to complete three short questionnaires. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to your responses and audiotape. To further insure your anonymity, identification numbers have been assigned to both of you. Therefore, do not put your name on any of the questionnaires.

Please listen carefully as I review these instructions. You will participate in three identical discussions where you will be asked to share with your spouse your thoughts and feelings about the topics on the back of the 3 x 5 cards. The front of each card will have a number "1" and the word "initiator" or a number "2" and the word "listener," and the word "husband" or "wife." This will

Appendix D--continued

indicate who will begin sharing their thoughts and feelings and who will listen. The reverse side of the cards will contain the discussion topics which will be identical for each spouse. It is important to stress that the role of "listener" is to listen to what is being shared and not engage in the discussion.

Each discussion will last for 15 minutes and will consist of three 5-minute phases. Spouse 1 will begin the first five minutes of each discussion during which he/she will share thoughts and feelings about the topic on the back of the card. Spouse 2 will simply listen. The sound of the buzzer will indicate the end of the first five minutes. After Spouse 2 resets the timer for the next five minutes and says "START," Spouse 2 will then share his/her thoughts and feelings about the same discussion topic while Spouse 1 listens. Remember, the second 5-minute phase is for Spouse 2 to share thoughts and feelings about the discussion topic on the back of the card and not his/her reaction to his/her spouse's sharing which occurred during the preceding five minutes. Again, the sound of a buzzer will indicate the end of the second 5-minute phase. The third 5-minute phase, which will begin after Spouse 2 resets the timer and says "START," is open for both of you to freely discuss your thoughts and feelings about your own and/or your spouse's sharing. Either spouse may initiate

Appendix D--continued

this final phase which will also end at the sound of the buzzer. For each of the 5-minute phases, you may stop the timer when you feel that you have nothing more to say, but you may not talk longer than five minutes. You will repeat this process three times with a different topic each time.

This may sound somewhat confusing so we have prepared sample cards to illustrate the procedure. (Give each spouse the same sample task cards.) As you can see from the card, the husband will initiate the first 5-minute phase; his wife will listen as he shares his thoughts and feelings about the disclosure topic, "My favorite ways of spending spare time." Are there any questions? (Retrieve the sample task cards.)

Since there are three topics, you will be given task cards three separate times. At the beginning of each new topic, each spouse will be given a new set of task cards indicating who should begin first. Here is the first set of cards. You may begin when I leave the room.

APPENDIX E
GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING
THE QUESTIONNAIRE PACKET

COUPLE I.D. NO. -----

HUSBAND --- WIFE -----
(Check one)

This study investigates the role of communication in the marital relationship of black couples. So that we may better understand the nature of this relationship, we ask that you provide the following information about yourself and your marriage. Your responses should be honest and reflect your true thoughts, beliefs, and feelings. To insure that the information you provide remains anonymous, please do not include your name on the questionnaires. We assure you that your responses will be kept confidential.

Be sure to read the instructions carefully before responding. There are no right or wrong answers but your responses should reflect how you truly feel. Therefore, it is important that you do not discuss any of the questions with your spouse until the packets have been completed. This is especially important since spouses may differ in their perceptions of the marital relationship.

Do not omit any question. If any of the questions are unclear, please do not hesitate to ask for assistance.

APPENDIX F
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE

Please provide the following information about yourself.

Age: _____

Years married to present spouse: _____

Number of previous marriages: _____

Number of children living with you: _____

Are your presently employed? Yes _____ No _____

Employment status: a. full-time _____

b. part-time _____

c. unemployed _____

Yearly income (your income only; check one). If you have more than one job, include your total income.

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ no income | _____ under \$5000 |
| _____ \$5000 to \$10,000 | _____ \$10,001 to \$15,000 |
| _____ \$15,001 to \$20,000 | _____ \$20,001 to \$25,000 |
| _____ \$25,001 to \$30,000 | _____ \$30,001 to \$35,000 |
| _____ \$35,001 to \$40,000 | _____ above \$40,000 |

Highest education completed:

- _____ less than a high school diploma
- _____ high school diploma
- _____ high school equivalency degree
- _____ professional training school

(check additional category)

Appendix F--continued

some college

AA or AS degree

BA or BS degree

graduate study

graduate degree (specify) _____

APPENDIX G
DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships.
Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement
or disagreement between you and your partner for each item
on the following list.

1 Always Agree	2 Almost Always Agree	3 Occa- sionally Disagree	4 Fre- quently Disagree	5 Almost Always Disagree	6 Always Disagree
1. Handling family finances.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
2. Matters of recreation.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
3. Religious matters.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
4. Demonstrations of affection.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
5. Friends.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
6. Sex relations.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
8. Philosophy of life.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
11. Amount of time spent together.				1 2 3 4 5 6	
12. Making major decisions.				1 2 3 4 5 6	

Appendix G--continued

13. Household tasks. 1 2 3 4 5 6

14. Leisure time interests and
activities. 1 2 3 4 5 6

15. Career decisions 1 2 3 4 5 6

1 All the time	2 Most of the time	3 More often	4 Occa- sionally	5 Rarely	6 Never
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	-------------	------------

16. How often do you discuss or have you
considered divorce, separation, or
terminating your relationship? 1 2 3 4 5 617. How often do you or your mate
leave the house after a fight? 1 2 3 4 5 618. In general, how often do you think
that things between you and your
partner are going well? 1 2 3 4 5 6

19. Do you confide in your mate? 1 2 3 4 5 6

20. Do you ever regret that you
married? 1 2 3 4 5 621. How often do you and your
spouse quarrel? 1 2 3 4 5 622. How often do you and your mate
"get on each other's nerves?" 1 2 3 4 5 6

1 Every Day	2 Almost Every Day	3 Occasionally	4 Rarely	5 Never
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23. Do you kiss your mate? 1 2 3 4 5

Appendix G--continued

1 All of them	2 Most of them	3 Some of them	4 Very few of them	5 None of them
---------------------	----------------------	----------------------	--------------------------	----------------------

24. Do you and your mate engage in
outside interests together?

1 2 3 4 5

How often would you say the following events occur between
you and your mate?

1 Never	2 Less than once a month	3 Once or twice a month	4 Once or twice a week	5 Once a day	6 More often
------------	-----------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------------	--------------------

25. Have a stimulating exchange

of ideas.

1 2 3 4 5 6

26. Laugh together.

1 2 3 4 5 6

27. Calmly discuss something.

1 2 3 4 5 6

28. Work together on a project.

1 2 3 4 5 6

There are some things about which couples sometimes agree
and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below
caused differences of opinion or were problems in your
relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no.)

29. Being too tired for sex. _____ Yes _____ No

30. Not showing love. _____ Yes _____ No

31. The dots on the following line represent different
degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle
point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of

Appendix G--continued

most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
.

Extremely <u>Unhappy</u>	Fairly <u>Unhappy</u>	A Little <u>Unhappy</u>	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect
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32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

- I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
- I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
- I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
- It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.
- It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
- My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

APPENDIX H
MARITAL CONVENTIONALIZATION SCALE
(Short Form)

Read each statement and decide whether it is true as applied to you, your mate, or your marriage. If it is true as applied to you, your mate, or your marriage, circle the letter T. If it is false as it applies to you, your mate, or your marriage, circle the letter F.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | F | 1. There are times when my mate does things that make me unhappy. |
| T | F | 2. My marriage is not a perfect success. |
| T | F | 3. My mate has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate. |
| T | F | 4. If my mate has any faults I am not aware of them. |
| T | F | 5. My mate and I understand each other completely. |
| T | F | 6. We are as well adjusted as any two persons in this world can be. |
| T | F | 7. I have some needs that are not being met by my marriage. |
| T | F | 8. Every new thing I have learned about my mate has pleased me. |

Appendix H--continued

- T F 9. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my mate.
- T F 10. I don't think any couple could possibly be happier than my mate and I when we are with one another.
- T F 11. My marriage could be happier than it is.
- T F 12. I don't think any couple could live together with greater harmony than my mate and I.
- T F 13. My mate completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.
- T F 14. I have never regretted my marriage, not even for a moment.
- T F 15. If every person in the world of the opposite sex had been available and willing to marry me I could not have made a better choice.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Shirley Chennault received her B.A. degree in psychology from the University of South Florida in 1973. While working as a counselor with Project Upward Bound at the University of South Florida, she began her graduate studies in guidance and counseling. Shirley earned her M.A. degree in counseling in 1976. In the fall of that year, she began her doctoral studies in counseling psychology at the University of Florida. In 1977, Shirley began working with Eastern Airlines to support her graduate studies. During that time she also managed to undertake another career--being a wife to her husband, Jody, and mother to their son, Jamaal.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



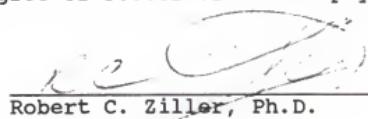
Carolyn M. Tucker, Ph.D.
Chairman
Professor of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



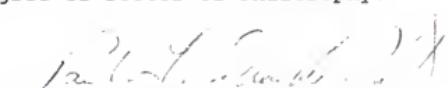
Greg J. Neimeyer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Robert C. Ziller, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Paul G. Schable, Ph.D.
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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August, 1989

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